DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 295 326 EA 020 088

AUTHOR	White, Doug
TITLE	Education and the State: Federal Involvement in Educational Policy Development. Policy Development and Analysis Series.
INSTITUTION	Deakin Univ., Victoria (Australia).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-7300-0472-4
PUB DATE	87
NOTE	125p.; For related documents, see EA 020 083, EA 020 085, and EA 020 087.
AVAILABLE FROM	Publication Sales, Deakin University Press, Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria 3217, Australia ($12.95 Australian; quantity and educational discounts).
PUB TYPE	Viewpoints (120) -- Collected Works - General (020)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Capitalism; *Educational History; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; Federal Government; Foreign Countries; Governance; *Government School Relationship; Institutional Autonomy; *Marxian Analysis
IDENTIFIERS	*Australia (Victoria)

ABSTRACT

This volume is part of a series of monographs from Australia devoted to outlining an alternative approach, based on neo-Marxist concepts, to policy studies in education. The opening essay in this volume is a historical analysis of federal involvement in Australian educational policy development. After a descriptive overview of the role of education in Australian society, the relationship between the state and education is described both before and after federation, showing how education, as part of a national process, received no place in the Australian Constitution, though it has subsequently become a concern of the central government. Subsequent topics include the growth of federal intervention from 1901 to 1963, the revival of Commonwealth intervention after World War II, the federal handout to primary and secondary schooling from 1963 to 1972, the policies of the Australian Labor Party (1972-1973), and Commonwealth influence in education after Whitlam (1975 to the present). An interpretive conclusion analyzes the political significance of the central government's expanded role in contemporary Australian education. Five readings comprise the second half of the volume: (1) "Education and Capitalism"; (2) "Create Your Own Compliance: The Karmel Prospect"; (3) "After the Divided Curriculum"; (4) "Participating in Nothing: New Moves in Education"; and (5) "Education: Controlling the Participants." An annotated bibliography is included. (TE)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED295326

Education and the state: Federal involvement in educational policy development

Doug White

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Fay Warby
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EA 020 058

Policy development and analysis

Education and the State: Federal involvement in educational policy development

Doug White

La Trobe University

Deakin University

This book forms part of the **ESA842 Policy development and analysis course** offered by the School of Education in Deakin University's Open Campus Program. It has been prepared for the **ESA842 Policy development and analysis** course team.

Course team
Richard Bates
Diana Macmillan (course developer)
Fazal Rizvi (course chairperson)
Peter Watkins

Consultants
Richard Smith
Deborah Towns
Doug White

The course includes:
John Prunty, *A Critical Reformulation of Educational Policy Analysis*
Fazal Rizvi, *Multiculturalism as an Educational Policy*
Richard Smith, *The Inequalities Debate: An Interpretive Essay*
Deborah Towns, *The Responsibility to Educate Girls for a Technologically Oriented Society*
Peter Watkins, *Youth, Schooling, and Work: Policy and Transition*
Doug White, *Education and the State: Federal Involvement in Educational Policy Development*

These books are available from Deakin University Press, Deakin University, Victoria 3217

Students enrolled in the course are also supplied with a guide to the course

Published by Deakin University, Victoria 3217
Distributed by Deakin Unviversity Press
First published 1987

© Deakin University 1987

Edited and designed by Deakin University Production Unit
Printed by Deakin University Printery

National Library of Australia
Cataloguing-in-publication data

White, Doug, 1933- .
Education and the state.

Bibliography.
ISBN 0 7300 0472 4.

1. Federal aid to education—Australia. 2. Education and state—Australia. 3. Educational planning—Australia. I. Deakin University. School of Education. Open Campus Program. II. Title. III. Title: Policy development and analysis. IV. Title: Federal involvement in educational policy development.

379.1'21'0994

Series introduction

The series of monographs of which this volume is part is devoted to providing an outline to an alternative approach to policy studies in education. The dominant tradition in policy studies has clearly been that of functional analysis based upon essentially economistic conceptions of education. Moreover, policy development has been seen largely as something done by experts and imposed by administrators on a somewhat recalcitrant education system. It is our view that such a conception of policy development and analysis seriously misrepresents the nature and activities of education systems.

While there can be little doubt that a conception of education as a *production* system is widespread, and that such a conception implies that industrial corporate management techniques are appropriate, it is becoming clear that education is also a *cultural* system that involves not only the learning of basic life skills but also systems of meaning, aspiration, and purpose through which notions of personal and social identity are articulated.

Education systems display both the diversity of approach to these issues evident in the wider society and also a degree of autonomy from other institutions. These characteristics ensure that education systems have become, as Bowles and Gintis suggest, laboratories in which competing solutions to the problems of personal liberation and social equality are tested, and the arena in which social struggles are fought out.

Collectively these monographs attempt to explore some of the dimensions of these struggles in Australian education. Beginning with a formulation of a critical theory of policy development and analysis, the series continues with a historical examination of various federal initiatives on educational policy; these are followed by an analysis of the equality debate. Against the theoretical background provided by the first three monographs, a number of key policy issues are examined. These include the current crisis in relations between youth, schooling, and work; gender and schooling; and multiculturalism. We hope, in the future, to add further monographs on such issues as the politics of examinations, certification, and credentiation; curriculum policy; the role of minors in policy formation. Each will be set within the context of the struggle to create an equitable, just and humane education system as a contribution to the development of a society that exhibits these qualities more strongly.

Fazal Rizvi
Course team chairperson

Contents

Series introduction iii

Education and the State: Federal involvement in educational policy development

Introduction 3
Education in Australian society. 4
State and education before federation 6
The formation of federation: The exclusion of education 7
Creeping intervention: 1901 to 1963 10
The revival of Commonwealth intervention 13
The federal handout to primary and secondary schooling: 1963 to 1972 15
The ALP in power: The 1972-73 systemisation 20
Commonwealth influence in education after Whitlam 25
A conclusion and interpretation 30

References 34

Readings by Doug White

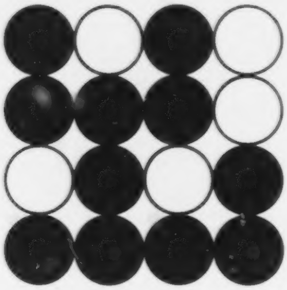
1. Education and capitalism 41
2. Create your own compliance: The Karmel prospect 71
3. After the divided curriculum 85
4. Participating in nothing: New moves in education 101
5. Education: Controlling the participants

Annotated bibliography 121

About the author 124

Acknowledgments 125

Education and the State: Federal involvement in educational policy development



Introduction*

When the six Australian states joined together as a nation in 1901, education remained a state responsibility. Various powers were transferred to the new federal government, but education was not a matter which was made a federal responsibility. In the twenty or thirty years before 1901—it varies by a few years between the states—schooling had become in part a responsibility of state governments. Each state had established a system of primary schools controlled by government departments. But in each state there were also private primary schools. These schools were run by religious bodies, sometimes primarily to propagate a faith and maintain a community, in other cases primarily to promote a class interest and position. These schools were independent of the governments, although governments made some rules—of attendance, for example—which applied to them. Beyond the primary school the state governments had little to do with schooling at all at the time of Federation. Secondary or technical school systems did not exist. There was not even a hint of a tertiary *system* of education. Some states did not even have a university at the time of Federation.

The theme of this essay is that of the move towards the establishment of integrated systems of schools, for that has been the effect over time of federal policies in education. Today it is commonplace to speak of primary, secondary, technical and further education and tertiary levels or systems of schooling. Although we still speak of 'state' and 'private' schools, the fact is that there is no such thing as a 'private' school in the sense that these existed until a couple of decades ago. Practically all schools are supported to some extent with public funds. The maintenance of a secondary system, the development of a tertiary system, and the partial integration of the private and state schools are all the work of federal governments—work which did not seriously begin until the mid 1960s. This transformation has occurred without any formal transfer of powers to the central government. The state governments still make the laws on attendance, the regulations on health requirements of the schools, the rules on the qualifications required of teachers, and the laws on the curriculum, insofar as there are any. The federal government exerts all its control and influence through its financial powers, which have effectively been enhanced over the years. As a general rule, the federal government's financial power has been used to advance certain ideologies: sometimes as a consequence of apparently pragmatic politics, as in the days when R. G. Menzies first took steps to distribute federal funds to the schools in the 1960s; sometimes more deliberately, as when E. G.

***Note**

Fazal Rizvi and other members of the course team at Deakin University made many helpful comments on earlier drafts of this paper. Diana Macmillan was patient and helpful in drawing attention to inconsistencies and errors. Eileen Sedunary and Bob Bessant, both far more knowledgeable on Australian history than I, read the manuscript in an earlier draft. In a more general way, my colleagues in the magazine *Arena* and in the Centre for the Study of Innovation in Education at La Trobe University have helped over the years in the formulation of the views expressed in this work.

Whitlam was prime minister, between 1972 and 1975, when clearly stated policies on schooling were developed. Looking at the two elements—the distribution of finance and the propagation of ideology—we can break up the history of federal government involvement in educational policies into five periods. The first, from Federation to about the 1960s, was a period when the spirit of the Constitution was followed—education was only in minor ways a federal matter. The second period, from around the mid 1960s to 1972, was a time of education as investment; there was an expansion of education at tertiary level, and some adjustment of it at secondary level was seen as necessary to the maintenance of Australia's economic position. The third period, from 1964 to 1972, saw aid come to secondary schooling, and the resolution of the issue of state aid to private schools. The fourth period was that begun by the ALP governments of 1972-74 and 1974-75, when the federal state began a process of participation by government and people in the affairs of the nation, including its schooling. The activities of the state expanded, and intervention in the life of the people became commonplace. Though such policies were not supported enthusiastically by subsequent Liberal Party governments, they were not overthrown nor replaced. The final period is that of the present, when the big political parties confront each other on a new common ground—the recognition of new class divisions and new international divisions and alignments.

These periods will provide the structure for this essay. Before outlining each period in more detail, however, a preliminary part is necessary, to discuss the question: why was it that the Constitution did not include provision for education?

Education in Australian society

A nation in the process of formation should, it seems, give a lot of attention to the bringing up of its young people. The newly formed Australian nation did not. Perhaps the explanation is in the *doubtful nature* of the Australian nation. In formal Constitutional terms, an Australian nation and state was created in 1901. However, the conditions for the establishment of a nation—a popular feeling and movement, an articulation of this feeling into a national culture, and a leading class which would provide the ruling groups of a nation—did not exist in a strong and coherent form. There was certainly a movement for Australian identity late in the nineteenth century. But the Australian ruling group, who provided most of the representatives at the constitutional conventions, while it had its hands in the pockets of Australian workers and farmers, kept its heart and mind in London. Hence, as we shall see, the Australian federal Constitution was largely an arrangement of economic convenience to colonial leaders and a political matter to the British Colonial Office. The popular national movement to make Australia provided the sentiment for an Australia, but had little effect upon the Constitution. The Australian nationals were in any case culturally divided, between those who emigrated from English-occupied and Roman Catholic Ireland; and those who came from England or the more thoroughly subordinated peoples of Scotland and Wales. Whether those who sought an Australian nation could have overcome these divisions we shall never know; for it now seems that the distinctions have been largely eradicated by later developments.

In Australia the subordinate groups, the rural workers and a proportion of the selectors who took up small rural holdings, carried on and developed an independence and some opposition to the Empire and colonialism. It is a tradition still celebrated in bush music clubs and in the study of the classics of Australian literature. Nevertheless in economic and class terms this opposition remained petit-bourgeois. The commanding positions in Australian economy and political life were with a bourgeoisie tied to England, in fact largely a branch of the English bourgeoisie in Australia. Federation did not break the bonds of Empire; it may well have strengthened them.

The history of federal government involvement in education is largely that of the working out of the instrumental uses of schooling in the framework of the economic and system-stabilising needs of capitalism in Australia. Countries which have a stronger definition of their national character than Australia can point to their schools as the makers of a particular kind of person. For example, in writing of American education, the United States historian Bernard Bailyn argues that the American character has been formed by schooling, a schooling itself formed by the transition from the old extended family of colonial times. He writes:

> What was recognized even before the Revolution as typical American individualism, optimism, and enterprise resulted also from the processes of education which tended to isolate the individual, to propel him away from the simple acceptance of a predetermined social role, and to nourish his distrust of authority.
>
> (Bailyn 1972, p. 49)

No doubt there are many historians within the United States who have made different estimates of the national character of the 'Americans', and different interpretations of the role of education. The point of the reference here is not to either recommend or disapprove of its content, but to suggest that no one would realistically make such a comment upon the kind of person produced by the Australian school—with the exception of the embattled Roman Catholic school in the days when these were taught by members of religious orders propagating a peculiar kind of Irish-Australian Catholicism.

We lack a history of Australia which is also a history of education in Australia. Education and schooling, it is argued here, have functioned to serve instrumental purposes in two related ways. On the one side, education is used for economic functional purposes, equipping the population with the necessary skills for the workforce. On the other, schooling serves an integrative function in society, providing a section of the population with the education necessary to articulate a cultural meaning for the society, and to ensure that all of the population accepts these. In this sense, schools form the intellectuals and propagate the cultural norms for the society. In all countries schools fulfill these functions. They lay the foundation for economically useful skills, and they assist in the constitution of the society around the making and propagation of its abstract norms and values. (For an elaborated account of the functions of intellectuals and, by implication, schooling, in society, see Sharp 1985.) While these functions are carried in all societies, the manner in which these work in Australia or any other particular country is a matter for detailed investigation. In this essay, only a broad outline of the changing particular forms and uses of education is set out. To some extent the outline is filled in by the account of the role of the federal government.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, when the colonial governments were establishing themselves as independent units within the British Empire, the schools were used as consolidating agencies. The issue appeared as compulsory and secular public schooling versus support for the schools of the communal groups. After federation the potentially dissident groups faded from significance, with a final display of opposition in the anti-conscription campaigns of the First World War. Then, as Ian Turner (1974) shows, the syndicalist anarchism of the itinerant workers stridently expressed by the International Workers of the World, the upsurge of Irish national sentiment triggered by the suppression of the Easter Rebellion of 1916, the farmers and the industrial trade unions came together to defeat conscription in the referenda of 1917. But as Ian Turner also shows, the Great War affirmed Australia as Empire, and the abstractions which united Australians were those of Empire and the continued use of the nationalist verse and stories of the 1890s which were no longer added to. After 1919 Australian capital became stronger, and its opposition was within the framework of an economist-oriented trade union movement. For a short time in the Second World War, as England declined in power, and before the United States of America achieved hegemonic power in the capitalist world, an independent view prevailed. During and just after the Second World War, the plans of the Labor Party governments to establish an Australian nationhood never came to fruition.

After the Second World War Australia became part of the American-centred alliance, and the development of an indigenous culture was not fostered by official and ruling circles. As technological and economic progress established a world capitalism, Australia took a leading part in making use of the new creation of the world worker, as immigrants were brought in to man the new factories. The schools expanded, as the need for intellectually trained workers increased and a greater level of affluence produced the possibility of a prolonged period of schooling. It was in this period that federal government participation in education took off, making available the capital funds to expand tertiary education. The greatly expanded number of intellectuals and intellectually trained workers, produced in the first place out of instrumental needs, created a system problem. How were they to be incorporated into a stable society? From 1972, with the return to office of a Labor Party government, this became the theme to which successive governments addressed themselves: that of making use of the intellectually trained workers in modern production and management, and of incorporating them as an essential part of the society. The newly expanded intellectual stratum, particularly its student section, gave the old structures a shake all over the world, most of all in Paris in 1968. Their integration into the social order has proceeded since.

Brief and sketchy as it is, this essay fills in this. Doubtless, it needs fuller treatment and much more argument in its support.

State and education before Federation

In the British colonies in Australia, community control over education was always underdeveloped, compared particularly to those colonies which began with a religious or cultural idea such as those of the Puritans in Massachusetts or the Catholics in Maryland in North America. Community concern for schooling was widespread, certainly, as parents often wanted their children to learn at least to read and write. This motivation, to maintain the communities through the schooling of the children, led to the establishment of a great many schools, at least in some states. P. J. Pledger, in his study of the Common Schools Board, 1862-1872, in Victoria shows how the conflict between community interests and the state developed (Pledger 1961, pp. 95-114). On the state side, the communities were asked to establish common and secular schools. Those who opposed them in the interests of maintaining and reproducing communities cemented by religion were gradually denied support from public funds. The religious groups did not inhabit clearly demarcated geographical areas. Hence, their schools became not community schools but sectional schools. The colonial governments were interested in establishing central control of administration, but within British imperial hegemony.

In the case of Victoria, the Education Act of 1872 which established free, compulsory and secular education was largely aimed at the Catholic schools—the schools of the one large group which did not completely or easily accept the Empire (See Grundy 1972). The Catholic schools survived, as an embattled system. The remaining schools, with the exception of those for the wealthy, became part of a centralised system. The partial victory of 'state' over 'church' was not a win in a war between nationalism or enlightenment on the one hand and a backward-looking cultural totalitarianism on the other. In his account of an early battle over church or state control of schooling, J. S. Gregory says that the defenders of the denominational principle tended to think of the schools as an adjunct of the church, while the defenders of State-directed education thought of the school as a training-ground for it citizens. To some religious people, the church was the training-ground of their citizenry. Father Geoghegan, quoted by Gregory, preferred rather

> that the child should remain in his simplicity of secular acquirements than that he should risk the loss of his faith . . . I say that sooner than lose the faith by which every true Catholic should live I would prefer that our children should be nescient of secular knowledge.
>
> (Gregory 1973, pp. 59-60)

The secularists could be sure that the future rulers of the colony would be educated in the private church schools for the wealthy. Secular schools were for the poor. The Catholic Irish and their descendants were mainly of the poor people, and their church had no part planned for it in the administration of education within the British imperial hegemony. Hence the upper-class schools, generally speaking Protestant, looked to the United Kingdom. So did the state schools. The Catholic schools were less reliable, and sometimes oppositional. The effect was a partial combination of the social division of the mass of the people, a division which many years later provided a basis for the public funding of private schools.

The formation of Federation: The exclusion of education

The makers of the Australian constitution were not primarily concerned with building an Australian nation. There was certainly an Australian national sentiment and movement at work; and it sometimes took radical form. In the 1890s an Australian literature and art developed and became popular. In 1895, for instance, the sales of a collection of ballads by A.B. ('Banjo') Paterson, *The Man From Snowy River*, exceeded all expectations and was in its third edition by the end of the year (Clark 1981, p. 136). The workers of the separate colonies had formed Australia-wide unions—the Amalgamated Miners' Association in 1874 was the first, followed by the Amalgamated Shearers' Union in 1887 (Campbell 1945, pp. 17-18, Fitzpatrick 1940, pp. 29-30). But nationalism in Australia was not always related to an independent Australia, and capital remained firmly oriented to England. The professors of literature at the universities did not share the popular liking for Australian poetry and stories. As Manning Clark tells us, the historians did not challenge the idea of W. C. Wentworth—a figure of some importance in early colonial times in Sydney—that Australia was 'a new Britannia in another world' (Clark 1981, p. 137). As Humphrey McQueen argues in his *A New Britannia*, this view was held by many inhabitants of the colonies, but a radical nationalist democracy existed side by side with a patriotism to England and the British Empire (McQueen 1970).

There are several different interpretations of the development of Federation in Australia. Michael Dunn in his book *Australia and the Empire* argues that federation was a plan by British Imperialists. Imperialists first wanted the British colonies throughout the world brought into an Imperial Federation, and Imperial Federal Leagues were set up in England, Canada, and in 1885, in Australia (Dunn 1984, p. 65). A super-imperial parliament was called for, but this ran into opposition from local nationalist feelings. White Australians did not look forward to sitting with Asians in the same parliament. Imperial defence, some thought, might not coincide with defence of the Australian colonies. Anti-imperial feeling even went as far as republicanism and the Imperialists yielded, settling for the promotion of an Australian federation within the Empire. In 1901 the Duke of York, the son of the newly installed King Edward VII, came to Australia to open the new Parliament. Henry Lawson wrote a poem, 'The Men Who Made Australia' for the occasion:

> Oh, the daily Press will grovel as it never did before,
> There'll be many flags of welcome in the air,
> And the Civil Service poet, he shall write
>   odes by the score -
> But the men who made the land will not be there.
>
> (Lawson 1957, p. 215)
>
> For the men who made Australia federated long ago,
> And the men to rule Australia—they can wait.
>
> (Lawson 1957, p. 217)

Politically, the Commonwealth of Australia was formed as a unit of the British Empire. Whether or not the particular argument propounded by Michael Dunn is accepted, there appears to be a general agreement among the historians of the significance of the British connection. Australia was not formed as part of a surge of nationalist feeling. It was formed, perhaps, to contain it (Clark 1981, p. 129). The Australian constitution was developed, in part, as a compromise between Empire and nationhood.

Just as national sentiment and imperial interests were related together in Federation, so were national sentiment and economic advantage.

Manning Clark quotes a 'barracker for federation' at a meeting held in Hobart in the late 1890s:

> Gentlemen, if you vote for the Bill you will found a great and glorious nation under the bright Southern Cross, and meat will be cheaper; and you will live to see the Australian race dominate the Southern seas, and you will have a market for both potatoes and apples; and your sons shall reap the grand heritage of nationhood . . .
> (Clark 1981, p. 129 quoting J. Hume Cook, 'Recollections and Reflections: The Story of My Life' typescript.)

The question of markets gave a strong impulse to the movement for Federation among businessmen and colonial leaders. Prior to Federation each colony had its own laws on trade between the colonies. Victoria had tariffs to make the imput of manufactured goods expensive, in order to protect its own manufacturing industries. All colonies had some tariff policies, except New South Wales, which followed a policy of free trade. The tariff was also an important source of revenue for the colonial governments.

The depression of the 1890s, according to the economic historian A. G. L. Shaw, 'gave the decisive spur to the Federal movement' (Shaw 1955, p. 182). The bank crash of April-May 1893 was related, according to A. W. Martin (Martin 1964, pp. 215–25), to the emergence of the New Federation Movement, inspired in part by the need for a consolidation of the efforts of the colonies towards recovery. But historians argue about these matters, and there is a great deal of literature on the relation between the political and the economic, and what it was that actually led the voters to cast their votes in the referenda on Federation. One thing is quite clear; the voters could make their marks only on proposals put forward by a rather small number of people and groups. National feeling, whatever its nature and strength, only indirectly acted upon the makers of the Australian Constitution.

Federation appears politically to have brought Australian nationalism into line with imperial interests. In accord with this, the processes of nation formation were very weakly represented in the Constitution. Education, as part of a national process, received no place in the Constitution. The Constitution did give the central government powers over immigration and defence, those elements of policy which reflected Australia's role as a partially independent member of a powerful empire, as a 'New Britannia' in the south. Federation, economically, was intended by the makers of the Constitution to give advantage to the colonial economies. The opening up of an Australian market to producers was a key part of this, and a section of the Constitution prohibited laws which restricted trade between the states. Another section of the Constitution, Section 96, allows the Commonwealth government to make grants to the states. When the Commonwealth was established, the states lost a source of revenue, that from tariffs and customs duties—taxes on trade. The framers of the Constitution regarded the first ten years as a period of adjustment (Badcock 1969, p. 66). During this period, customs revenue collected by the central government was to be distributed to the states, under Section 87. Section 96 of the Constitution provided for grants of assistance to the states during the first ten years of federation and therefore until parliament otherwise provided (Commonwealth Grant Commission 1933, p. 19). It is this section which has allowed the Commonwealth to take part in the support of education through making grants for specific purpose. The structure of the Constitution, and the historical processes which made the Constitution, have also shaped the way the Commonwealth has acted in education.

The manner in which Federation in Australia was shaped, and in which the Constitution was drawn up, has left a lasting impression on the funding and direction of education in this country. When systems of schooling were first developed in the colonies, the schools were divided: the schools of the colonial elite were private and Protestant, and looked towards Britain; the schools of the Irish-Australians were poor and Catholic; the schools run by the governments were secular and colonial. The nationalist movement in Australia did not become, in the main, republican and independent. Federation continued imperial control while meeting some of the nationalist sentiment. More significantly, Federation allowed the manufacturers and traders within each colony a larger market. Federation was a political compromise, and an economic convenience. As the Constitution was not concerned with nation building, it did not include education among the powers allocated to the Commonwealth. The Constitution did make provision, however, for economic relations between Commonwealth and states. Education could, therefore, be supported and influenced by the Commonwealth through its money granting powers. So it has been. Education, as we shall see, has become a concern of the central government. It has become so as a political and economic matter. The powers of the Commonwealth have expanded enormously since 1901. Nevertheless its genesis in political compromise and economic advantage still shape its activities.

Creeping intervention: 1901 to 1963

The constitution gave the Commonwealth no explicit power to act in the field of education. In its early years, probably no government particularly wanted to do so. Nevertheless the central government did involve itself in schooling as time went on, in the first place as an offshoot of its responsibilities in defence. During the First World War the Commonwealth launched a major repatriation education program, the Vocational Training Scheme, which provided returned soldiers with technical and university education. The Commonwealth sponsored some particular university activities, such as the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at the University of Sydney in 1928 (this support was associated with the responsibilities of the government in New Guinea). The Commonwealth sponsored Lady Gowrie Centres—kindergartens—in the 1930s depression, and hence entered into pre-school education (Tannock 1971, Cowen 1972).

None of these activities amounted to a policy in education. They were extensions of other activities, particularly defence, or handouts to various financially desperate good causes in a manner consistent with drought or bush-fire relief. Two other activities were more far reaching. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) was involved with Australia's technical schools and universities by the early 1920s (Tannock 1975). Through the CSIR the Commonwealth was able to engage in some planning of a scientific kind by supporting research. The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) was supported, in part, by Commonwealth grants from 1946. The ACER began in 1930 with a grant from the American Carnegie Foundation, and with some inspiration from the scientific notions of measurement of intelligence and achievement which had been well developed in North America. Its objectives were to foster research into education in Australia by grants to research workers; to conduct and publish the results of its own research; and to give support to any worthwhile educational development (Badcock 1969, p. 49; Australia, Martin Report 1964, vol. 1, p. 97). From soon after its foundation the ACER was concerned with the general development of education in the nation as a whole. Its director, K. S. Cunningham, in 1936

> reproached all states for not having devised 'a considered and comprehensive plan of educational development' with reference to local conditions and local studies, and on the broader scale, concluded that 'no educational policy for Australia is possible under the present system'.
>
> (Cunningham 1936 in Sedunary 1975)

The ACER was interested in a more scientific or objective approach to education, one which would make it freer from the political control of ministers of education. A critical approach to education, not possible from administrators in state systems, was necessary (Sedunary 1975). Cunningham proposed a national bureau of education which could produce and share ideas, effectively compile statistics, and make some inroads towards federal financial support for education. The ACER developed some of the characteristics of a bureau itself (Badcock 1969, p. 90) and did some service to the federal government when it expanded its operations in later years.

R. J. Fitzgerald, in commenting upon the difficulties that men such as Cunningham had in introducing or gaining support for reformers, contrasts the 'local' with the 'cosmopolitan'. Local authorities, he argues, tend to take a parochial and self-satisfied approach; when they are critical, it is of detail rather than of assumptions. Cosmopolitans, on the other hand, take a world view from which they are able to be critical of local assumptions and arrangements (Fitzgerald 1975). On this view, ACER represented an early form of the cosmopolitanism which came with North American scientific approaches to education in the 1930s, and which was later to overwhelm previous theory and practice in the 1960s. It is worth noting that not all of the account which Fitzgerald gives can be fitted into the cosmopolitan-local pair of categories. For instance, the reforming Minister of Education in the brief period of ALP government in Victoria (1945–47), Mr Frank Field, was scarcely a cosmopolitan (Fitzgerald 1973, p. 115).

During the Second World War, the Commonwealth launched a number of educational programs. These included: the Technical Training Scheme, to provide training for thousands in defence industries and the armed forces; the Financial Assistance Scheme, to support full-time students in strategic university faculties; the Army Education Service; and the Post-War Reconstruction Training Scheme, which provided formal education to servicemen and women, and support for universities and technical colleges.

A more systematic attempt at a coherent direction to education at an all-Australian level was made during the Second World War. The Commonwealth government, under manpower planning rules that it had developed in the war-time emergency, directed young men into the armed forces, industry, and it set quotas for university faculties. A matriculant who was restricted from enrolment at the University of Sydney sued the government in the High Court. The case was heard in May 1943. The regulation that was used to set quotas was declared invalid. The judges of the High Court commented on Commonwealth powers in this area. The Chief Justice, Sir John Latham, found that 'The Commonwealth parliament has no power to legislate with respect to the subject of education as such' (Tannock & Birch 1973, pp. 163–74).

The war-time ALP government, led by John Curtin, was a reforming government. It looked forward to a post-war world which avoided the inequalities, social divisions, and unemployment of the 1930s. To do this it believed that some form of social planning was necessary. But planning in the field of education was going to be difficult in view of the opinion of the High Court.

Mr John Dedman, who was Minister for War Organisation of Industry and Minister for Post-War Reconstruction in the Curtin and the late Chifley governments, established a committee to rationalise the Commonwealth's policy in relation to education in October 1943. The committee was then known as the Inter-Departmental Committee on Education, and later after its chairman as the Walker Committee. At the third meeting Walker said

> Any realistic view seems to be that the industrial future of this country and its security from a defence viewpoint depend, very largely, on research and technical education (in the field of primary industries as well as secondary industries), and that the political future and unity of the country depends very largely on the use we make of general education, especially for adults. Whatever the outcome of the movement to give the Commonwealth greater powers, there seems no doubt at all that the Commonwealth has an education task ahead of it. Although the task may not lie largely in the field of actual administration, there will be very considerable demands on the Commonwealth, arising from its own activities and from the pressure from outside, and from the need to try and build the Commonwealth into a real unity over the next 10 or 15 years.
>
> (Tannock 1975, pp. 11–12)

The committee made several recommendations, many of which were implemented by the government before it went out of office at the 1949 elections. The Commonwealth Office of Education and the Universities Commission were established on a permanent basis. The Australian National University was launched. The Constitution had been amended to give the Commonwealth the power to legislate with respect to benefits to students (Tannock 1975, p. 21). As a result of other war-time projects of the government, particularly the Reconstruction Training Scheme, Australia's universities had become heavily dependent upon the Commonwealth. However, although machinery for distribution of finance and influence on education remained in place, the goals of the government—the building of national unity, a unity in which education would be important—were lost sight of when the Liberal Pary, led by R. G. Menzies, came to government in 1949.

The revival of Commonwealth intervention

During and just after the Second World War the Australian universities became dependent on financial support, which the Commonwealth had offered for various education schemes for returned soldiers. The Labor governments which held power until 1949 intended to develop a continuing role for the Commonwealth in university education, and almost certainly it would have extended this to school education through a policy of support for students. (The Commonwealth government gained the right to provide benefits to persons, including students, under the constitutional amendment passed by referendum in 1946 allowing it to make laws regarding social service benefits.) The defeat of the ALP in the 1949 election brought a temporary halt to the expansion of central government activity in primary and secondary schooling. The incoming Liberal Party government, led by R. G. Menzies, did continue to support university education. By 1951 assistance began on a regular basis; recurrent expenditure at universities was systematically assisted until 1957 (Birch 1977, p. 21). In this period the work of the universities remained uninvestigated; only their financial situation was considered by government authorities.

In 1957 this changed. Menzies presented the report of the Murray Committee, which he had appointed to investigate the future structure, organisation and function of the universities in Australia. The government accepted recommendations that an Australian Universities Commission be established, and that capital development, as well as recurrent expenditure, be supported by the Commonwealth. The Universities Commission had a planning role; it was to advise on matters related to financial assistance to universities with a view to promoting their balanced development, so that their resources could be used to the greatest possible advantage of Australia (Birch 1977, p. 21). As the Murray Report said:

> There must be collaboration, co-operation and co-ordination between the universities, the Commonwealth Government and the State Governments . . . it appears to us that the day is past when planning of university development can be left entirely to individual institutions or confined within the boundaries of one State.
>
> (Murray Report 1957, p. 98)

With this proclamation and the acceptance of the Report's recommendation on planning came the official recognition of a new use of the universities. In their original foundation they were the agencies of training in culture, thereby giving the ruling groups of their time a larger perspective and a continuity.

The founding of the University of Melbourne was the work of the cultured gentlemen of the time, as described by one of its later professors in his history of the university (Scott 1936). The Legislative Council of the newly separated colony authorised its founding in 1853. Its most important founder was H. C. E. Childers, an Englishman who in 1859 returned to his country—in a sense he never left it—and entered the House of Commons. The first professors were expected to 'stamp on their future pupils the character of loyal, well-bred English gentlemen' (Scott 1936, p. 22). The new colony was growing rapidly, material wealth was an engrossing object of pursuit; the University of Melbourne was to provide an element of culture and stability to the future rulers. Women were permitted to attend the University after 1881. That change took quite a battle; academic and intellectual culture has always been associated with class-based elitism in this country as elsewhere.

Gradually the role of the universities changed. Under the leadership of Menzies, who appears to have had quite a conservative view on the universities, a further new role was being made for them. They were to become planned, integrated bodies, serving social, including economic and technological, ends.

With the acceptance of the Murray Report, a system of universities had been set up in Australia—analogous to a system of schools, although nowhere near as centrally directed as a state school system. The control of the universities system was confined to planning and financing; it did and does not include appointments and syllabuses. Yet there is little doubt that the curriculum of the Australian universities has become oriented towards the technological and social-functional in recent years.

Central planning and systematisation of tertiary education went further ahead with the Martin Report of 1964. The Martin Report—*Tertiary Education in Australia. Report of the Committee on the future of Tertiary Education in Australia to the Australian Universities Commission*—led to the setting up of a system of tertiary education. Technical colleges became Colleges of Advanced Education or Institutes of Technology and the teachers' colleges—once run by education departments of the states—became part of the system. The Martin Report was also responsible for elaborating the new ideology of higher education. Among its conclusions and recommendations were:

> 1. (v) Education should be regarded as an investment which yields direct and significant economic benefits through increasing the skill of the population and through accelerating technological progress. The Committee believes that economic growth in Australia is dependent upon a high and advancing level of education.
>
> 1. (vii) The Committee has framed its recommendations with the object of widening the range of educational opportunities beyond the secondary school, of providing extensive vocational and specialized training and of ensuring that Australia makes a worthwhile contribution to the advancement of knowledge and of achievement.
>
> (Martin Report 1964, vol.1, p. 1)

As a result of the Martin Report, the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education (CACAE) was established in October 1965 (Wark 1977, p. 153). At first the Committee subsidised Colleges of Advanced Education, on the basis of a ratio to state government spending. Later, the Commonwealth government fully supported the tertiary institutions. In its third report in 1972, the Commission on Advanced Education (the name of the commission had been changed) offered the government advice that led to the setting up of the Australian Committee on Technical and Further Education (Wark 1977, p. 154). That commission was established in 1975, and added another segment to the Australia-wide system of education. (The states still carry two-thirds of the costs of TAFE colleges.)

We can see then that from 1957 universities, and later tertiary education in general, became a federal government responsibility. In doing so, a unified system of tertiary education became established. The Australian Constitution did not include control of education as a Commonwealth government responsibility. Seventy-five years later, tertiary education was almost totally a Commonwealth responsibility. The world had changed. Universities, at the time of Federation, were centres of learned culture. Technical schools, where they existed, were tied to and supported manufacturing industry. Three-quarters of a century later the university had become, because of its access to science, a service to the intellectual training of the workers required for the new technologically based capitalism (Sharp & White 1968). Technical Colleges, now Colleges of Advanced Education, also took on this role. A new layer of schooling, in the Colleges of Technical and Further Education, did the direct servicing of the factories and workplaces—but even here, the school rather than the work experience has come to dominate.

These developments in the federal government's control of education contradict the letter of the Constitution. The evolution of the actual Constitution of Australia, rather than its formal statement, is towards a new mode of integration of Australia, within itself and with powers beyond the national boundary. The Commonwealth has acted in the economic interests of the ruling groups. It has not established a national direction in a cultural or political sense. Perhaps a sense of national purpose did motivate the wartime and post-war Labor governments, but Menzies remained a British Empire man to the last; he had no great interest in Australian nationalism or an Australian nation. The universities, oriented to a selection of Western European culture in its colonial outpost, became reoriented to universal science and technology. Capitalism throughout the world became steadily more supra-national, and the particular characteristics of nations everywhere less significant.

The federal handout to primary and secondary schooling: 1963 to 1972

It is widely believed that federal assistance to schooling began in 1964. With the exception of the universities, this is largely true. No one theory is widely held as to why this change came about. Some think it was largely a matter of political opportunism; the Prime Minister, R. G. Menzies, found himself in a tough spot. He acted to put pressure upon the opposition Labor Party—itself divided on the state aid issue, a relic of the division between its Catholic and secular working-class supporters—and to win an election. Menzies was however a politician of considerable skill. He was able to grasp opportunities for immediate political advantage in a manner which also maintained conservative power in a long-term sense. Fitzgerald, taking a line not far from that of those who attribute political opportunism to Menzies, supports the view that the Menzies government's policy could be described as 'ad hoc intervention into economic, social and cultural matters and the attempts to balance one pressure group against another, with the government emerging as a kind of paternalistic, developmental and protective agency and a manager of crisis' (Fitzgerald 1975, p. 185).

But, even if no explicit plan existed, the changes made up a consistent pattern. As we have seen, the efficiency and utility of education in achieving national goals was to the fore of the political ideology towards the universities in the late fifties, and became stronger. Besides this, the people in general were sending their children in ever-growing numbers to the state secondary schools, and the states had insufficient funds to meet the demands. Popular opinion favoured Commonwealth government aid to the state schools; 241 000 people said so in a petition to the Prime Minister in 1961 (White 1972, p. 227). Commonwealth action in school education was inevitable. No doubt its timing and particular shape were determined by the particular political leadership.

Mr R. G. Menzies came to office as prime minister in 1949, and he remained in that position for a record period, finally stepping aside early in 1966. Menzies' politics were of the Right. In 1951 he attempted to ban the Communist Party, in 1954–55 he made the most of the defection of a minor Soviet diplomat, V. Petrov, to discredit the Australian Left, including the Left of the ALP. Menzies was a skilled politician, and knew how to win. The times favoured him; the form of the class struggle of the kind familiar in the 1930s and 1940s, and upon which the Left still based itself, was changing. Working-class city dwellers moved out of the rented houses of the inner suburbs into mortgaged ones in the suburbs. The economy continued to expand, and workers shared in the increased prosperity. Working people did not, in large numbers, feel themselves to be addressed by the rhetoric of the Left. Old class divisions lost their clarity, and did not take a new shape until the struggle against Australia's involvement in the war in Vietnam, from 1967 to 1972. Menzies had a relatively easy political run, although there were scares. In the 1961 federal election, held at the time of an economic recession, the ALP almost defeated the Liberals.

As we have seen, even in the earlier part of his Prime Ministership, the Menzies government supported the universities. The support given after the Murray Report of 1957 was relatively generous, and was not accompanied by strict controls. In 1964 a further enquiry into tertiary education—the Martin enquiry—produced far-reaching recommendations. The Martin Report declared a new ideology for the higher levels of education, that of education as investment in human capital. The term has almost died out now, but fitted with the times, when the technologies of computing, electronics, genetic engineering and the like were scarcely heard of, but promised a new life for which the country needed new trained talent. (Human capital, capital invested in trained talent, was regarded as economically significant in a manner similar to that of capital invested in machinery and buildings. The ideology still exists but the term has been found to be rather useless in economic calculation.) The Martin Report also proposed a tripartite system of tertiary education: universities, colleges of advanced education, and teachers' colleges. The period of support and influence for universities in general, and sometimes for particular projects at the universities, had ended; it was replaced by the integration of the universities as part of a tertiary system which responded directly to government needs (Sharp 1969, 1970). Menzies was getting old, and near the end of his long reign as prime minister. He retired in January 1966. Nevertheless his part in, at least, allowing this re-orientation of the direction of tertiary education indicates that he was not merely a conservative pragmatist; he presided over the modernisation and political incorporation of tertiary education.

Menzies also began Commonwealth initiatives into primary and secondary education. His steps, taken not long after his near-defeat in the 1961 election, are thought by some to be taken out of political opportunism; a vote-winning act. However, before we discuss the interpretations, let us have an account. The account will have a 'before' and 'after' quality, as if Menzies, somewhere along the way, came to see things differently.

In August, 1960, Menzies was directly asked in parliament whether his government favoured financial assistance to independent schools. His reply was quite simple; 'The honorable member puts to me a question that is outside the jurisdiction of this Government' (Albinski 1966, p. 7). As Albinski comments, this reply was connected to Menzies' philosophy of Commonwealth aid to education in general.

> On numerous occasions, he explained that while there was constitutional authority for federal assistance to the states that could be tied to education or to specific educational projects, he believed that the federalist principle of state control over education should be respected, or alternatively that it was improper to grant federal money for educational purposes to the states and then surrender control over its application.
>
> (Albinski 1966, p. 7)

Albinski refers to three statements made by Menzies at different times during 1958. Until at least late in 1960, it appears that Menzies opposed federal aid to private schools and to state education systems, alike.

State aid to education was a political issue in the late fifties and early sixties. The Catholic population was expanding, and as with other schools the number of students staying on to higher levels of the secondary school was increasing. The Roman Catholic church resources, particularly its 'human resources' of teaching brothers and nuns, were not. Schooling was becoming more expensive, for the secondary school was increasingly expected to have science laboratories and well stocked libraries—and these were costly in both capital outlay and running expenses. Some people describe this period as one of rising expectations: parents expected a better future for their children, and a better future meant among things clean and well-paid jobs, instead of the monotonous, dirty and often dangerous industrial work of the parents. Other analysts, while not denying the change in expectations, say that this change has a material basis in the changed forms of labour required by industry becoming technologically transformed.

Part of the rising expectations, and the break up of the old solidarities of class and religion, was showing politically. In 1955 a remarkable political party, known for most of its life as the Democratic Labor Party, was formed as a result of a split in the Australian Labor Party. The DLP was supported largely by Catholic voters (although most Catholics continued to support the ALP), and it took many votes away from the ALP, particularly in Victoria and in Queensland. The old, originally ethnic, difference between the Catholic-school educated and state-school educated sections of the working class now acted to divide the Labor vote. DLP preferences, directed to the Liberal Party, were important to the maintenance of that party in government. Among other policies, the DLP was very much in favour of state aid to private schools; the schools of its own members and supporters were desperately in need of such aid. State aid for private schools became a live political issue. The big and wealthy Protestant private schools for long did not favour government aid; they were outside and above school systems, even the state, ideologically. Protestant voters, on the whole, had been opposed to aid for private schools. But in the early sixties there were indications that this was changing.

The ALP was divided on the state aid issue, particularly in New South Wales, where the split in the party had not been very important, and the DLP was quite weak. In 1963 the New South Wales ALP tried to introduce assistance to private schools to build science facilities. The federal executive disapproved of the New South Wales ALP policy. The ALP was divided, on an issue which the Catholic bishops and the DLP had made a major public one. Menzies saw the opportunity to improve his very small parliamentary majority, obtained a dissolution of federal parliament, and called an election. Financial support for education was a major issue. The ALP promised grants to the state, and scholarships to students in state and private secondary and technical schools, and teachers' colleges. The DLP promised state aid to church schools. Menzies, on behalf of the Liberal and Country parties, offered scholarships. In addition, £5 million per annum was to be made available to provide science facilities in secondary schools, government or independent, on a school population basis. The election result was a sweeping victory for the parties led by Menzies, their majority increasing from two to twenty-two (Albinski 1966, pp. 22-3). Of course state aid, although an issue in its own right was not all that won the election for Menzies. The state aid issue was an indication of the effects of far-reaching changes in the nature of the Australian class structure. The DLP vote, nationally, declined from 8.7 to 7 per cent. Although the party remained strong for another two elections, this was the beginning of its end as an important political force. It had, in effect, played a part in bringing Catholics out of their working-class and ALP traditions. It broke the separate quality of Catholics, even though this was what the DLP emphasised. It is not easy, nowadays, to tell a Catholic from a non-Catholic in moral and political style. Once it was. No doubt this loss of specific Catholic qualities would have occurred anyway, but it is ironic that the Democratic Labor Party did its bit to destroy its own constituency.

Within a year or two, it became clear that Protestant schools were also prepared to accept the Commonwealth science facilities. Before long the ALP transformed its policies, not only on state aid but on a range of issues. Gough Whitlam—a lawyer, a Protestant, a 'typically modern' person—became leader of the ALP, and the ALP's image of dominance by working-class men was changed. A rather small political promise, costing only five million pounds, delivered for apparently opportunistic reasons, was at the centre of a storm of political party transformation. It was also at the beginning of an educational transformation, as we shall see.

P. N. Gill, in analysing the federal science grant, quotes Sir Robert Menzies in a speech made in July 1964 after the Bill authorising these grants was passed:

> Now this, in my innocence, I thought was a sensible idea. I didn't know when I pronounced it, that it was so loaded with sinister aspects. Five million pounds a year—yes, it's a great sum of money, and particularly if it is each

> year, a useful sum of money, and why did we do it? Well, we had various things in mind. In the first place, Australia in this scientific technological age, needs more people trained in science, better trained in science. The Australian universities need to have better equipped students coming up to them in science . . . everything that can be done to improve the standard of the student in the secondary school, many of whom will go to the university, many of whom will go into other fields of applied science, anything that we can do seems to me to be all to the good.
>
> (Gill 1964, p. 285)

As Gill remarks, many people were to question this self-painted 'picture of a high-principled innocent, devoted to the cause of learning and Australia's scientific future' (Gill 1964, p. 286). Yet the money was accepted both as cash and in principle. The Roman Catholic Church was of course willing. Protestant church leaders often were not. Their schools, though, were in favour of taking the money. Public opinion polls showed that over time a majority of Protestants as well as Catholics accepted or supported some form of state aid. It seemed fair, as some said. At the conclusion of his article, Gill writes: 'Alive for more than a hundred years, the topic of state aid to independent schools would certainly not be laid to rest in 1965' (Gill 1964, p. 351). No doubt, but even in 1965, as Mr Gill's account shows, the debates were not the same as those of a century earlier. Apart from small groups of Protestants, particularly those associated with the Loyal Orange Lodge, few saw the issue as the independence of church from state in the fashion of the nineteenth century.

Teachers' unions were, and are, concerned about the social categorising that private schools allow; but they raise issues of class and privilege, not the relationship of church and state. The promise of 1963, and its enactment in 1964, began a change in education which, systematised in 1972–73, is still being worked through. As the principal of Box Hill Grammar School (now Kingswood College), a Methodist school not at all characterised by wealth, said in 1964: 'Until we get state aid, the church schools are going to remain the preserve of the wealthy' (Gill 1964, p. 350). The speaker spoke truly. Religious divisions have fallen away, state aid has increased, and schools are divided in ways which are not so clearly those of the old class divisions. It may be reasonable to speak of the divisions between some private and most state schools as a class division, but the class of private school users is not only that characterised by old wealth, nor even the petty copiers of the wealthy class.

Was there a logic in the development of Commonwealth participation in schooling—a logic in which political opportunism played a tactical role? Or did Menzies and his government act upon purely vote-winning motives, and in doing so start an irreversible trend? When we look at the systematic nature of the Menzies government approach to financing the universities, the claim that political opportunism was the main motivation seems rather thin. Remember the Murray Report was well before the 1964 moves for support for the secondary schools, and by then the committee of enquiry that produced the Martin Report was well advanced in its work. Menzies and his advisers may not have had a systematic plan in mind, but they must have been aware of the need to update the schools in some measure, particularly in science and technology. His move was a vote-winning measure, it is true. People had advocated and petitioned for federal support for the state schools for many years. Menzies, true to his class and his kind, saw the opportunity to exploit this popular view by supporting the demand in a way which the radical and secularist leaders of the campaigns had never intended. It was a chance to exploit the division between the ALP and its former voters who now supported the DLP; to give financial support to the private schools; and to weaken the state bureaucracies in charge of the state school systems. In doing so, Menzies helped bring the Catholics out of their ghettoes and into the full variety of political life in the country; and it opened the way to the expansion of the private schools well beyond their old numbers and significance. No doubt he did not intend those consequences, and probably nobody at the time guessed at them.

The ALP in power: The 1972–73 systematisation

The major political parties in Australia, the ALP and the Liberals, have ideological differences on the centralisation of government. The ALP, in this respect consistent with the thinking of its founding supporters in the 1890s, tends to favour a unified Australia. As part of this, it favours the centrality of government function in the Commonwealth. The non-Labor party, nowadays called the Liberal Party, has a tradition going back to British imperialism. In its early days the non-Labor party or parties had little regard for a national unity. They have tended to favour state rights.

Largely, these ideologies are of the past, although not without some continuing influence. As we have seen, in practice the Liberal Party when in office has continued the centralising tendency of the Commonwealth. It has tended to do so less theoretically, apparently more pragmatically. Thus, the ALP governments between 1943 and 1949 tended to favour a national approach to education, including the university level of education. The Liberal governments which succeeded them did not particularly favour this approach but in 1964 went about establishing, effectively, a national system of tertiary education. The ALP governments from 1943 to 1949 had talked about national unity and achieving social goals. The Martin Report, accepted by the Liberals, talked about human capital and economic goals. The effects of each ideology may be much the same; but the pace and framing of the policies introduced varies.

As it was with tertiary education, so it is with the schools; but in reverse order. After Menzies promised, then introduced, policies which cut through two long-standing matters—the independence of the church schools from the state, and the provision of education as a matter for the states—the ALP continued and gave some theoretical form to the policy. But that did not take shape until 1973.

After Menzies introduced the legislation for science grants to all kinds of secondary schools in 1964, it was found—as Menzies had intuited—that state aid carried no dangers to political parties. In part it was thought to be educational progress, in part it indicated a new belief in equality—even Catholics deserved a fair go, Protestants apparently now thought. Only the Defence of Government Schools organisation continued to campaign against state aid for church schools. Menzies also introduced Commonwealth government scholarships, to be available to all students by test, and to be taken up in the final two years of secondary schooling in either state or private schools. (This, of course, was not such a radical move; the Constitutional amendment of 1946 allowed the Commonwealth government to legislate benefits for individual students.) A side effect of this new scholarship was the test, developed by that old reserve body of centralised planning, the Australian Council for Educational Research, which set about finding the bright child without assuming that particular knowledge had been taught. The ideology of abstracted skills without knowledge was given a boost by the tests (White 1967, pp. 25–33).

The precedent established by the laboratories grant was extended to school libraries in 1968. As Don Smart suggests (1978, p. 79), Menzies may have hoped to assist a highly specific area with a terminable capital program and only at the secondary level. Senator John Gorton, who as Minister for Education declared in 1966 that education was '*tending to become, in effect, a partnership between the Commonwealth and the States*' (Smart 1978, p. 80), had long-term goals. In the 1966 election, aid to education was again an issue, and the major political parties promised federal aid to the schools. The Liberal Party achieved an overwhelming victory, and set about carrying out its promises of grants for the building of teachers' colleges, doubling the amount allowed to independent schools for science laboratories, and the establishment of a federal Department of Education and Science. The campaign for library grants soon got under way and was achieved in 1968. Various other programs followed; a detailed account can be found in Smart (Smart 1978, ch.6).

In 1972 it became clear to many that a new plan for education was necessary (Fitzgerald 1972, p. 30). Gough Whitlam, the leader of the ALP, not only proposed such planning; he also promised to convert the widespread concern about equality into a program. In his election campaign speech in 1972, he declared:

> The most rapidly growing sector of public spending under a Labor government will be education. Education should be the great instrument for the promotion of equality. Under the Liberals it has become a weapon for perpetuating inequality and promoting privilege . . . The Australian Labor Party believes that the Commonwealth should adopt the same methods to assist schools as it has adopted to assist universities and colleges of advanced education . . . We will establish an Australian Schools Commission to examine and determine the needs of students in government and non-government primary, secondary and technical schools.
>
> (Smart 1978, pp. 103)

On 12 December 1972, eleven days after assuming office, Whitlam announced the terms of reference and membership of an interim committee of the proposed Schools Commission. The committee submitted its report *Schools in Australia* (the Karmel Report) on 18 May 1973; a new blueprint for education had been produced. Later in 1973 the Schools Commission was formed.

Jean Blackburn, one of the authors of the report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission (the Karmel Report of 1973) believes that three reasons led to schooling becoming a major issue in Australian politics in 1972. One of these was financial; the states were responsible for schooling, but did not have adequate funds. A second factor was the rising concern at inequalities in educational opportunity. There was a widespread belief that resources should be equally available to all children, and some support for positive discrimination in favour of the schools serving poorer neighbourhoods. A third pressure was that for increased funding for non-government schools. The proportion of students enrolled in non-government schools had steadily declined for over a decade. Parental choice of schools had again became an active argument (Smart 1978, p. 187).

Equality had, in the late sixties and early seventies, come to have a new meaning. It came to mean, to play an active part in the making of one's life—equality of access to decision making, equality in social relations, as well as equality of access to material resources. At least, it had come to mean that to the professional intelligentsia, the group of intellectually trained workers whose numbers had expanded so greatly in the late fifties and sixties. As Jean Blackburn remarks, the Interim Committee placed 'devolution of responsibility and community involvement high on its list of values' (Smart 1978, p. 187). In its report the committee said:

> Responsibility should be devolved as far as possible upon the people involved in the actual task of schooling, in consultation with the parents of the pupils whom they teach and, at senior levels, with the students themselves. Its belief in this grass-roots approach to the control of the schools reflects a conviction that responsibility will be most effectively discharged where the people entrusted with making decisions are also the people responsible for carrying them out, with an obligation to justify them, and in a position to profit from their experience.
>
> (Karmel Report 1973, p. 10)

In pursuit of its aims, the Interim Committee recommended that funds should be directed to four programs, in addition to capital and recurrent expenditure. The four programs were for parent and community involvement in decision making, teacher development (including the development of teacher centres), special projects (innovations in particular areas such as an attack on literacy problems, multicultural education) and disadvantaged schools. Thus, the Interim Committee and the Schools Commission used its funding powers in an attempt to give a new direction to schools, not just to support their current practices. The general ideological flavour of the recommendations and programs was towards an equality expressed as participation.

The Schools Commission established a new role for the Commonwealth in education. It formulated a new mode of control, without an extensive exercise of bureaucratic power; it used funds ideologically, that is to favour certain directions, without a bureaucratic command system. Secondly, it tended to establish an Australia-wide schools system, on something like the model of the tertiary education system. The second tendency has remained relatively undeveloped; state governments still run school systems, the state departments are still large bureaucracies, and the teachers' unions are unions of state employees.

The ideology of the Karmel Report, and of the Schools Commission, has already been exemplified in the statement about the grassroots approach to democracy. It is an ideological statement, for in fact control remains where political and economic power resides. One way of describing this manner of governing a large-scale system is to call it 'participatory management'. For example:

> Schools can build within themselves a community where both education and people are valued, and where the influences of the market place do not dictate the price placed upon individual talents. Participation in such a caring com-

> munity which sets out to build social relationships through its method of teaching and learning can, by reducing the alienation of the individual, be a regenerating force in society.
>
> (Karmel Report 1973, p. 14)

Here education, people, and market are put as oppositions, or potential oppositions, which can be brought into harmony through a process of participation. The notion of equality in participation is strongly expressed throughout the Interim Report. It is in implicit opposition to the notion of equality as sameness, or even access to common understandings. Diversity is encouraged as part of this equality in participation.

> Better ways will not necessarily be the same for all children or for all teachers. This is an important reason for bringing responsibility back into the school and for allowing it to be exercised in ways which enable a hundred flowers to bloom rather than to wither.
>
> (Karmel Report 1973, p. 12)

Nor should there be only one criterion of excellence in education—an academic one (Karmel Report 1973, p. 23).

A further element of ideology in the report is in the approved and advocated form of association between school and life-outside-school. The quality of schooling, the writers of the Interim Report assert, is not to be judged merely in terms of its preparatory function.

> Schooling is a significant segment of life which for all children ought to be enjoyable and fruitful in itself, not merely a preparation for later life.
>
> (Karmel Report 1973, p. 94)

Further, school might become a part of a 'community'.

> . . .some schools might evolve through successful interaction with their communities into new 'open' institutions, less alienated from their communities than is now generally the case in disadvantaged areas.
>
> (Karmel Report 1973, p. 94)

Here again the participatory ideology is expressed. People can participate, in a real sense, in a community. The members of a community may know one another, interact with each other in a variety of ways, share common problems, and perhaps have similar political orientations. The Interim Committee, and the Schools Commission itself, were not part of a community; they were part of the central functioning of a society.

Some criticisms of *Schools in Australia*, the Report of the Interim Committee, made at the time of its release were critiques of management. The Report took up popular issues of participation, and made them part of a planned official policy (White 1973, pp. 35–48). The Report was on the whole well received, and the critique of it as a management exercise largely ignored. The ideology of many people in education, particularly the teachers, coincided with the ideology of the Karmel Report. As one social critic pointed out at the time, in a comment on the new Labor government, the first since 1949:

> . . .policies labelled 'Labor' are in fact expressive of a new stage in relations between the imperialist states, between the great power centres in general and between the rich and the poor nations as well. In interplay with this altered world context, the change of government denotes a significant shift in the modes of power and social control. The paradox and threat of Labor in power is that the liberatory culture myths associated with the Labor tradition tie directly to policies of welfare and equality which allow extended

> control of the person to take hold quietly; seeming benign they do not excite opposition, appearing to relate to universal cultural needs and the rights of man, they do not seem to be concerned with power at all.
>
> (Sharp 1973, p. 1)

In fact, the big change in the Commonwealth government's role in schooling was largely uncriticised at the time. Even in the Australian parliament the Opposition confined its criticism to those sections which affected the financing of the wealthiest private schools. Few political or educational theorists made substantial analyses of the new direction. The articles collected together in a single book (D'Cruz & Sheehan 1975) probably include all the serious criticism made. Nevertheless the general line of advance for education chartered by the Interim Committee, though it served as a policy base for over a decade, has now run its course. The contradictions in the ideology of participation—in the notion of equality favoured at the time—have turned into contradictions, antagonisms, and problems in practice. We shall turn to the fate of the ideologies and practices of the Schools Commission set up under the Whitlam Labor government shortly.

In the meantime, take stock of what happened in 1973, and compare it with the past records of Commonwealth governments. Until the Labor governments of the Second World War, the Commonwealth made no plans for education. Even those Labor governments, in their plans for a new society after the war, did not rate education very highly. Nevertheless their orientation was Australian, not state or empire; and they produced at least one lasting monument, the Australian National University.

After 1949, in the long period of the coalition governments of the Liberal Party and the Country Party, plans and visions were replaced by economic progress and pragmatic politics. Economic pragmatism required that the universities be given a new role, and their financial support and planning headquarters came from Canberra. Similar pressures led to the first aid for schools, in 1964. The economic changes which required the expansion of education led to changes in the composition of society, and in social ideologies.

The ALP, the party of opposition, was the point of attraction for the enlarging group of teachers and other, articulate, intellectually trained workers. Its leadership changed from the representatives of the working class—men like Chifley and Calwell—to representative of the new trend, in the first place Gough Whitlam. Mr A. A. Calwell described the electoral platform for the 1972 election as in accord with 'a quasi trade union-cum-white-collar professional control' (Calwell 1972, p. 259). Calwell described the new assertive faction as one composed of school teachers, barristers, solicitors and other university graduates. The new ALP policy appealed to the urban populations of Sydney and Melbourne, and Labor came to parliamentary power, at the end of 1972, largely as a result of large swings to it in the eastern and south-eastern Melbourne suburbs. At this time the old antagonisms of church and state had largely lost their force; and the tradition that education was not a matter for the Commonwealth had largely worn out its significance. The way was open for the ALP to introduce its new policies. For the first time, the central government of Australia was proposing that through education it would manage Australian society. Its stay in office was brief; the representatives of the old class power rallied, and had the government dismissed. Its ideologies continued, with some shifts, in the hands of the new government; but the ideologies allowed the formation of new social divisions, in the name of equality of participation.

Commonwealth influence in education after Whitlam

Late in 1975 the parliamentary opposition, led by Mr Malcolm Fraser, the leader of the Liberal Party, engineered a parliamentary crisis. The upper house, the Senate, in which the Liberals and their ally had a majority, blocked supply—that is, they did not pass the bill which allowed the government to function, to pay its bills, including the wages of public servants. The Prime Minister, Mr Gough Whitlam, was prepared to continue in office, and organised loans to pay the bills. Fraser called upon Sir John Kerr, the Governor-General, the representative of the Queen; Kerr dismissed Whitlam from office and installed Fraser as Prime Minister. An election was called. The people democratically voted to support the decision of the man above democracy, the Governor-General, and elected the Liberal Party led by Fraser to government. The old ruling powers had, temporarily at least, dismissed from office the coalition of 'trade unionists, school teachers, barristers, solicitors and other university graduates'.

Fraser and the Liberal Party found themselves with nothing much to say or do. In education they retained the Schools Commission, although they replaced the chairman. Choice and diversity was, perhaps, more emphasised than the other elements of the participatory package. There was greater emphasis on the private schools, but in practice these had been well supported by the Labor government. Whereas Whitlam had emphasised social cohesion, which meant in education such things as participation in diverse activities, including support for private schools of all kinds, Fraser emphasised social division, which in practice meant choice and diversity and support for private schools.

Fraser made much, in his early period of office, of rhetorical divisive terms like reference to those on unemployment benefits as 'dole bludgers'. However in the main the actual policies remained much as before. Three new areas need our attention. These are: the growth of the private schools, which indicated an increasing social division showing in schooling; the introduction of the transition from school to work program, in which federal funds were used to provide an ideology in education; and multiculturalism, which while not new was emphasised by the Fraser government.

Table 1 shows that in 1978 a long trend towards increasing enrolment in government schools was reversed. The proportion of school students in non-government schools increased from that year, and that tendency has become stronger. The possibility of attendance at a non-government school has been enhanced by the financial support from the federal government, though the evidence does not tell us that this was a cause. It is safe to infer that a social trend towards a division in education has developed on lines different from those which existed in the early years of schooling. The private schools represent class divisions, but not of the kind prevalent in the years before the mid sixties, when a new mode of financing the private schools was initiated and became popularly supported.

The tendency of unemployment also indicates a new social division, as Table 2 shows.

Table 1: Enrolment in government and non-government schools

Year	Government		Non-Government		Total
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
1969	2 113 963	77.8	602 998	22.2	2 716 961
1973	2 240 642	78.5	612 769	21.5	2 853 411
1977	2 349 310	78.9	629 840	21.1	2 979 150
1978	2 354 420	78.7	638 210	21.3	2 992 630
1979	2 336 720	78.2	650 210	21.8	2 986 930
1980	2 318 080	77.7	666 490	22.3	2 984 570
1981	2 999 400	77.0	688 000	23.0	2 987 400
1982	2 282 970	76.2	711 680	23.8	2 994 650

Source: Figures from *Australian Year Book*, except those for 1982; figures for 1982 from Commonwealth Department of Education and Youth Affairs, *Education in Australia*, 1984

Table 2: Numbers of unemployed (in thousands)

Age	15–19	20 +	20–24	25 +
1970	19.5	52.0	–	–
1974	28.6	66.7	–	–
1978	124.9	–	79.6	190.8
1982	137.5	–	101.8	210.6

Source: *Year Book Australia*, no. 57 (1971), p. 695, no. 61 (1975–76), p. 700, no. 63 (1979), p. 135, no. 67 (1983), p. 174

By the mid 1970s it was clear that the great expansion of employment opportunities for trained people was well and truly over, as a general trend. Teacher unemployment was one sign. Lawyers and doctors too tended towards 'oversupply'.

I have not been able to find any figures on the social class of the parents who enrol their children at private schools. There are suggestions, impressionistic evidence if you like, that the groups which were a key part of the ALP revival in the late sixties and early seventies have maintained a belief in participation with a dichotomy in its application. That is, the intellectually trained groups are among the users of private schools (or of selective government schools), while advocating participation of others in the government schools of the non-selective kind. In any case there is evidence of new class divisions in modern Australia. So far this has been little theorised or analysed, although attention has been drawn to it (Nonie Sharp 1979, Hinkson 1981).

The policy of the School to Work Transition Program was established by the Commonwealth Ministers for Education and Employment and Youth Affairs in November 1979. The Transition Program, according to the Commonwealth Guidelines of 1981,

> is to stimulate or extend a range of development in the interests of young people making the transition from school to working life . . . The Program should provide education and training, with a work orientation where

> appropriate, for these young people and also tackle the problem of those in the schools who are likely to be in similar difficulties when it comes their turn to leave.
>
> (Victoria 1984, p. 5)

The Program focused on 15 to 19 year olds. Funds were distributed, at least in Victoria, for government secondary schools, on the basis of proposals put to a state committee, or to regional committees. In 1983 the Victorian Government was granted $11 754 500. The TAFE sector received funds for Educational Programs for Unemployed Youth and Pre-Vocational Programs, as well as special programs and projects. One effect of the funding was to introduce to the Colleges of Technical and Further Education an involvement with young people who were not in work or in courses directly leading to work. The new section of the population which was not employed, a problem which appeared to be a long-term one, was made a matter for the schooling system.

The effect on secondary schools is not clear. Perhaps, and this would be consistent with other federal government initiatives in secondary schooling, the relatively small amount of money was intended to influence and involve the schools in paying attention to a particular area of governmental concern—in this case, the relation between schooling and employment. But we have no evidence as to how effective this was. The program was phased out after the defeat of the Liberal Party government led by Mr Fraser in March 1983, and was replaced by the Participation and Equity program.

The third initiative of the Fraser government to be mentioned here is the introduction of multiculturalism as an official policy. As Fazal Rizvi has shown, this became an official government policy in 1978 following the publication of the Report of the Review of Post-arrival Programs and Services for Migrants (1978), *Migrant Services and Programs*, known generally as the Galbally Report (Rizvi 1985, p. 19). As far as schools were concerned, emphasis was placed on encouraging a multicultural attitude. The policy, although initiated by a Liberal Party-led government, is supported by the Australian Labor Party and has continued. The policy is analysed and discussed by Rizvi, and will not be considered in detail here. It is sufficient here to comment that the policy follows in the tradition begun by the Karmel Report of 1973, the use of the schooling system as an agency for social policy. Multiculturalism, ideologically, is directed at two groups. It is an attempt to integrate migrants into society as participating members, a form of assimilation which does not require the denial of ethnic origins. In the light of the policy, ethnic origin should not be a barrier to participation, just as under various affirmative action programs within Australia gender is not to be a barrier. It is not intended that migrant groups will form separate units within the nation, with their own territories, languages and economies. While multiculturalism is a new form of assimilation, it is one that proposes a less powerful notion of national identity. Some have seen in this policy a reflection of the changing world economy, the development of the 'world worker', and the alteration of cultural identity (Hinkson 1984). Multiculturalism as ideology also involves the intellectuals and intellectually trained. The social practice of intellectuals and related groupings is such that they are not oriented primarily to particular nations, social structures, or historical periods; they therefore tend to see culture as constructed around persons rather than through groups and their traditions. Hence multiculturalist policies and practices have strong support among the intellectuals and the intelligentsia as well as among some immigrants.

Recent developments in Commonwealth approaches to education tend to be concerned with two elements: economic stringency and accountability, as the need for expansion of the educated population has ended; and attempts at cohesion of the population as it is now divided. These two aspects are characteristic of the Hawke Labor government since its election in March 1983. Now it is established that the Commonwealth government has a strong hand in education, both financially and in determining direction. Federal funding now covers virtually all the costs of universities and colleges of advanced education; and about one-third of the cost of technical and further education (Department of Education and Youth Affairs 1984, p. 1). The Commonwealth contributed in 1982–83 eleven per cent of the public money spent on government schools; and 68 per cent of the public money contributed to non-government schools (Quality of Education Review Committee (QERC) 1985, p. 10). Putting it another way, the Commonwealth now funds almost four-fifths of post-school education, and more than one-fifth of school education (QERC p. 187). The issue now is not that of a Commonwealth hand in education, but what the hand does. Some idea of the directions favoured by the current government can be gained from a study of the *Report of the Quality of Education Review Committee* (1985). This committee, chaired by the ubiquitous Peter Karmel, was set up in August 1984 to 'examine the effectivenss of present Commonwealth involvement in primary and secondary education with a view to assisting the Government to develop clear, more efficient strategies for directing its funds for school level education (QERC 1985, p.iii). It delivered its report in April 1985.

The Report acknowledges that it is the government's policy to raise the level of participation in secondary education—participation meaning attendance. This will not cost a great deal since due to changes in the age structure of the population, increased proportional retention will not expand total school enrolment (QERC 1985 p. 190).

There are three reasons suggested for this policy. One is that a broad education in school is a necessary foundation for building the occupational skills required for work in a 'post-industrial economy'. A second is that the school provides a welfare and social support service, in the heterogeneous society of today—heterogeneous in language background, attitudes, beliefs and values. Perhaps the schools are to be the mixing ink-wells of modern society. A third is to do with employment. If the number of teenagers in full-time education can be increased by about one-third, and a traineeship program developed as planned, youth unemployment could be brought 'down to a level comparable with that of the 1960s, while full-time job opportunities for the young continue their downward trend'. The schools, that is, have the twin function of increasing the level of education necessary for modern work, and incorporating socially and institutionally the increasing numbers for whom modern society offers no work.

In a typically Labor Party way, welfare policies are used to maintain the situation which produces the need for welfare. In a typically modern fashion, a fashion brought into government policies in Whitlam days, a negative quality is expressed positively—unemployment, in this case, is called increased school retention rate. The curriculum is defined in terms of the social use of the schools: 'The curriculum is the vehicle through which schools develop the general competences and other competences which underlie effective participation in adult society' (QERC 1985 p. 192). According to the Report, among the general competences required by all individuals (and these are the only ones listed) are:

- acquiring information
- conveying information
- applying logical processes
- undertaking tasks as an individual
- undertaking tasks as a member of a group.

This threadbare and contentless approach to curriculum takes us back to where this story started. The Constitution of Australia was prepared in a manner set apart from the people's movement, and established the barest of economic and political arrangements for cohesion between the states. The real cohesion of capital lay elsewhere, and the cohesion among the people was not developed by the new national institutions. The plan to establish a national capital, Canberra, away from the centres of population typifies and exemplifies the approach of the Constitution-makers. Now we see in the *Report* of the Quality of Education Review Committee the uses of schooling proposed to the Commonwealth government are instrumental and confined to those matters which are useful in a utilitarian sense to 'national' purposes.

Of course this similarity is superficial. In the latter part of the nineteenth century a national feeling was developing, and the process of federation of the states both accommodated and avoided this development. Nowadays, in a world of electronic media, nation and community are less significant. The meaning of the world comes less from our direct interactions with one another, and more from our access to the media. What appears to its participants as community action is very often a begging request to distant authority. Participation in modern society is usually supplication, a plea for money rather than justice or mercy.

However, this narrow utilitarianism has been balanced or filled out by the continued propagation of the ideology of participation. Participation has at least two meanings in educational policy making in recent years. One is that of attendance. Since the days of the Martin Report of 1964—since 'human capital'—the involvement of larger numbers in the higher secondary and tertiary levels of education has been regarded as necessary to economic development. More recently, and as a response to a lack of motivation and involvement in society—a problem foreseen by Habermas for all modern societies (Habermas 1979, p. 166)—participation has been advocated and sought. In an article published in 1983, two Labor Party theoreticians spoke of schooling in these terms:

> Earlier analyses had given most attention to the effects of socio-economic disadvantage on educational outcomes, and had led to such valuable programs as the disadvantaged schools program, abolition of fees for tertiary study and the introduction of tertiary allowances. The newer analyses reveal much about the disabling consequences for many students of secondary schools structuring their curriculum so that the majority of their students fail in the academic competition. The advent of universal secondary education calls for a reassessment of the role of secondary schools.
>
> (Dawkins & Costello 1983, p. 72)

Dawkins was at the time of writing Shadow Minister for Education. His party, in government, set about establishing a schools' policy along the lines Dawkins and Costello proposed. Senator Ryan, the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, said in a ministerial statement in 1983:

> The Government hopes that the PEP will provide a focus for involving people in creating a constructive consensus about education. Employers and unions, parents and the community generally have an important part to play in developing and supporting constructive policies for education and training provision in our schools and TAFE Colleges.
>
> (Victoria 1984, p. 3)

The 'involvement' approach is continued in a recent issue of the *PEP Guide* for Victorian government schools. The 1986 edition says that the program places special emphasis on curriculum-based school improvement to ensure that:

- all students complete a full secondary education which is intrinsically valuable to them and which lays the foundations for life-long learning . . .
- curriculum development provides all students with greater access to success in schooling so that all participants can benefit equally from their school experiences.

(Victoria 1986, p. 1)

Note that the *PEP Guide* refers to government schools. Taking this into account, we can see that the general shape of the government's plan is to continue financial stringency, and the development of a two-class education system. The 'better' government schools and the private schools are oriented towards the higher employment which a modernised information-based society offers. Others will be involved in a curriculum which is varied enough to provide success. Teachers at government schools have often eagerly taken up the notion of participation. Radicalism has often come to mean engagement in this participation. But the issue of curriculum reform is still one of struggle, and teachers may yet develop different practices and break out the ideology of participation.

A conclusion and interpretation

Students of the relation between government and education have many government reports at their disposal, and some articles in exposition of the content of and practices arising from the reports. We have much less critical material. There are historical interpretations of the early days of schooling, but few of the period from the Second World War. Here we will try an interpretation in three ways: the first, more or less a restatement of what has happened, to see if simplification and categorisation of changes produces a plausible pattern; secondly, in terms of a theory of 'cosmopolitanism' as a source of change, a notion already hinted at, which has been used by Fitzgerald; thirdly, in terms of an analysis of social change as a trend towards the formation of a more abstract society, a trend away from community and nation.

The first attempt at interpretation will already be familiar to readers of this document, since it is the categorisation used within it. The Commonwealth government came into education in pursuit of other activities for which it was responsible—defence, foreign affairs, and some economic matters—in the years up to the Second World War.

In the Second World War, when Australia was threatened with invasion, the Commonwealth government expanded its powers in manpower and resource mobilisation, and in the training of returned servicemen and women. During the war Australia's role in the world changed, with the decline in significance of Great Britain and the Empire. National planning for a time had a larger possibility. But the Labor Government was defeated after the war, and a long period of a new subordination to the United States began. The economy expanded, and the need for a higher level of technical and scientific knowledge grew. The Commonwealth Government began to support the universities financially, and set up a co-ordinating agency, in the 1950s. In the 1960s a whole system of tertiary education was developed.

In the mid 1960s the demand for schooling exceeded the resources of the states to meet the demand. The Menzies Liberal Party led government offered some support, in a manner which also included the non-government schools as recipients of support. A new style of Commonwealth intervention developed, in which without much funding new directions were established for schooling. The expansion of the numbers of educated people, and the break-up of old communal and class allegiances, broke the old stabilities of politics. The ALP was heavily influenced by the new groups, and new ideologies of equality as participation became promoted by it when it came to government in 1972. The Schools Commission established in 1973 systematised, to some degree, a new ideological and financial pattern of schooling. New social divisions developed in the 1970s. The return to government of the ALP, led by R. J. Hawke, in 1983 allowed the development of new patterns to handle these social divisions. Earlier changes have made education a tool available to Commonwealth government; and schools are now being used as an agency to handle social divisions and unemployment.

In his book *Through a Rear Vision Mirror*, R. T. Fitzgerald (1975) describes and interprets the changes in education since the Second World War in terms of stability and dynamism, which are roughly equated with local and parochial culture and cosmopolitan influence. Science and scientific research are cosmopolitan influences. In the thirties these, while brought into Australia through the Australian Council for Educational Research, were largely ignored by the bureaucracies which controlled education. Proposals for change 'seem likely to encounter strong resistance in a stable social system marked by a general certainty about aim and method and a firm belief in familiar routines and long-standing custom (Fitzgerald 1975, p. 245). In these conditions crude administrative procedures and mechanical processes dominate. Demands are more likely to be made to improve services rather than for alternative approaches. During the Second World War the provincial and stable culture was disturbed, and some new ideas were seriously considered. But there was a 'return to normality and the values of the provincial culture' (Fitzgerald 1973, p. 361). In the seventies the growth of a dynamic culture brought about a changed climate of opinion. Educators were better educated and wider travelled. Social and technological change coming into Australia enforced review of routines and practices. Governments, both state and Commonwealth, set up enquiries, in which intellectuals were able to directly influence the making of policy. Some degree of bureaucratic control is inevitable, Fitzgerald thinks. But a desirable system of education always has room for experimentation and initiative.

Fitzgerald does not address directly the different functions of Commonwealth and state governments. In fact some of the initiatives he regards most highly come from the states; for example, the report *Education in South Australia* (1971), prepared by a committee of enquiry into South Australian education chaired by Professor Peter Karmel is regarded by him as something of a model in its use of research. The role of the Commonwealth in bringing in new initiatives, in financing education without an elaborate bureaucratic administration, does however fit with Fitzgerald's views. The Commonwealth governments in this view gain from their lack of attachment to the long-established systems of schooling.

To give a more complete explanation of the Commonwealth government's role, we need to consider the relation between the Constitution (the formal, legal document) and the constitution of Australia, the manner in which Australian social life is constituted.

Following a line of analysis proposed by Geoff Sharp (1985), we can see that all societies are constituted around an abstraction, a social practice not fully visible to those who are engaged in it. Sharp distinguishes between 'concrete' social relations and 'abstract' ones. Those which might be called 'concrete' are characterised by face-to-face relations. Thus workers in a factory have direct relations with one another, and out of their conditions of existence may form trade unions, see themselves as part of a working class which is characterised by that form of social relations, and so on. But workers are also engaged in a market process; they sell their labour. The market of an industrial society is not that of a pre-industrial village. Commodities processed in one place are exchanged for others produced in a distant place. Commodities have use to someone, of course. They also have an exchange value, which is not on the face of things obvious. Thus in modern societies cars, refrigerators and ball-point pens can in effect be exchanged for one another. They have an exchange-value. So does the workers' labour-time. It is exchangeable through money for goods. The abstract market exchange shows in the constitutive abstraction of capitalist, or industrial, society, Sharp argues. Social classes are formed through the workings of this abstraction. The abolition of the classes, in a transformation to socialism, does not necessarily change the constitutive abstraction of a society. In that illustration, there is evidence that class formations have a secondary quality.

In recent decades this constitutive abstraction has come into interaction with another abstract relation, that of the intellectually-related groupings. Intellectuals have for centuries stood alongside the social structure, related to it and supported by it, but not occupying a clear class or structural niche within it. The characteristic mode of the social practice of intellectuals is an abstract relation; they relate to one another in an apparently autonomous fashion through the printed word—the book and journal. To themselves, each appears as an individual, not a member of a network of relationships. Their central relations are not 'concrete', face-to-face, but distant or 'abstract'. The ideology of intellectuals is that of autonomy; they often believe that their personal characteristics are brightness, creativity, and so on.

Post-industrial society, as modern society is sometimes called, is characterised by the interaction of the abstract practice of the intellectuals with that of the market. The concreteness of the class existence formed around the commodity interchange is weakened. The ideology of autonomy becomes more widespread and dominant over class views. Constraints are seemingly reduced. The social life of a group appears as one of self-acting people making their relationships with one another; there appears to be no necessity to life; there are only restrictions to be abolished.

The preceding summary of Sharp's article does not do justice to the argument presented in it. Perhaps there is enough, however, to make some interpretation of the changes outlined in this essay. The Constitution of a nation is never a representation of its constitutive abstraction. Nations present themselves as a structure of common meaning and social organisation. The constituting abstractions of a nation are localised around limited forms of the constitutive abstraction—a bounded market, a history of the development of the group, a national literature and so on. Australia, at the time of federation, was not bounded in this way. It had some local characteristics, and yet was part of a larger history, a larger market, a larger capital. Hence its formal Constitution was weak. At times of strengthening of local capital and of national sentiment, as during the Second World War, federation became stronger. More recently it has weakened in some senses, and become strong in others.

The greater significance of the intellectually related groupings in the period since the Second World War has changed the social structure of Australia, and the significance of its central government. In the first place, action was taken, for purely capital-pragmatic reasons, to enlarge the intellectually related groupings required for modern production. Hence the moves made by Menzies in 1964 to support science, and later library, facilities in the schools. The rise of the new notions of fairness, equality, and autonomy—the weakening of the old loyalties of class and nationalism—allowed the weakening of the old distinction between state and church schools. The DLP, instrumental in the change, was formed out of an instrumental-political use of Catholic loyalty by the right-wing group, the National Civic Council. Yet the DLP also represented the break up of the class loyalty of the majority of the Catholics, an aspect of the developing ideology of autonomy among Catholics of the new professional groups, which indicated the end of Catholic loyalty. By 1972 the new ideology of autonomy, seeking to find a place in the political life of Australia, combined with working-class voters to bring Whitlam to office.

Schools and school teachers, in their vastly expanded numbers, were in the 1970s in the vanguard of progress; the expansion of the schools was a necessary pre-condition for the expansion of the intellectually trained workers. Here the ideology of autonomy was most clearly expressed. Beliefs in association rather than solidarity, participation rather than hierarchy, and equality on the basis of individuality were, and are, widely popular among teachers and related groups. Governments, concerned with maintaining social order, acted to incorporate these notions, to give them a structure which did not conflict with the interests of capitalist development. The ideology of autonomy produces no structure of itself. Teachers enthusiastically, on the whole, accepted the structures provided for them.

This is the period of the incorporation of radicalism by ideological practices, practices utilising the ideology of autonomy structured in a management perspective. The central government's significance expanded as a manager, a coordinator of the interelation between the newly important groupings and the older mode of commodity production.

The ideology of autonomy has no boundaries, but social systems do. Hence the constraints of economy and international relations have come into conflict with the ideology, providing a clue as to the basis of the policies of recent governments towards teachers. In any case, the period of rapid growth of the intellectually related groupings is over. As new class divisions appear, on top of the old ones, they take the form of inclusion in or exclusion from the places made available by the new constitutive abstraction of society. An underclass of unemployed, or socially redundant people, appear. The key place of those who activate the information science-based operations is ensured. Schooling moves to a position of attempting to conciliate and reconcile the new social contradictions.

On this analysis the change to an increasing Commonwealth role in education becomes a part of a more general change in the constitution of Australian society. The Constitution of 1901 had the possibilities of being the Constitution all these years later. But this was not because of its major text, as they say nowadays, but for its sub-text. The Constitution was set up in a context of Australia being a part of a world system, as it still is. The authors of the Constitution were not to realise that the Empire would be replaced by the West. The Constitution also made the Commonwealth the servant of economic interests; and as education has become just that, the Commonwealth has increased its real powers in that area. However, interpretation is not a matter for Constitutional lawyers. Interpretation requires analysis of the real forms of the constitution of Australian society.

References

Albinski, H.S. (1966), *The Australian Labor Party and the Aid to Parochial Schools Controversy*, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa.

Australian Schools Commission (Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, P. Karmel, Chairman)(1973), *Schools in Australia*, AGPS, Canberra.

Australian Universities Commission (Report of the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia, L. H. Martin, Chairman)(1964), *Tertiary Education in Australia*, Melbourne.

Badcock, A.M. (1969), Federalism and education in Australia. unpublished MA thesis, Monash University, Melbourne.

Bailyn, Bernard (1972), *Education in the Forming of American Society*, Norton, New York.

Birch, I. K. (1977), 'Commonwealth participation in education 1901-1964', in I. K. Birch & D. Smart (eds), *The Commonwealth Government and Education 1964-1976: Political Initiatives and Developments*, Drummond, Richmond.

Blackburn, J. (1977), 'Schools and the Schools Commission', in I. K. F. Birch and D. Smart (eds), *The Commonwealth Government and Education 1964-1976: Political Initiatives and Developments*, Drummond, Richmond.

Calwell, A. A. (1972), *Be Just and Fear Not*, Hawthorn.

Campbell, E. W. (1945), *History of the Australian Labor Movement*, Current Book Distributers, Sydney.

Clark, C. M. H. (1981), *A History of Australia*, Vol.5, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia (P. H. Karmel, Chairman)(1971). *Education in South Australia, 1969 to 1970*, Adelaide.

Committee on Australian Universities (K. A. H.Murray, Chairman)(1957), *Report*, Commonwealth Government Printer, Canberra.

Commonwealth Grants Commission (1933), *First Report*, Canberra.

Cowen, Z. (1972), 'The growth of federal participation in Australian education', in W. G. Walker (ed.), *School, College and University: The Administration of Education in Australia*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, pp. 3-16.

Cunningham, K. S. (1936), 'A critical account of Australian education', in Lord Eustace Perry (ed.), *Year Book of Education*, Evans Brothers, London.

Dawkins, J. & Costello, R. (1983), 'Education: Progress and Equality', in John Reeves & Kelvin Thomson (eds), *Labor Essays 1983*, Drummond, Melbourne.

D'Cruz, J. V. & Sheehan, P. J. (eds) (1975), *The Renewal of Australian Education*, Primary Education, Richmond.

Department of Education and Youth Affairs (1984), *Education in Australia*, Canberra.

Dunn, M. (1984), *Australia and the Empire*, Fontana/Collins, Sydney.

Education Department, Victoria (1984), *School to Work Transition Program* (Transition Education Advisory Committee), Melbourne.

Education Department, Victoria (1986), *Participation and Equity Program Guide*, Melbourne.

Fitzpatrick, B. (1940), *A Short History of the Australian Labor Movement*, Rawsons Bookshop, Melbourne.

Fitzgerald, R. T. (1972), 'Emerging issues in the seventies', *Quarterly Review of Australian Education*, 5(3), 1-47.

Fitzgerald, R. T. (1973), 'Factors in change and education: A perspective on the seventies from the forties', PhD thesis, LaTrobe University, Bundoora, Victoria.

Fitzgerald, R. T. (1975), *Through a Rear Vision Mirror*, ACER, Hawthorn, Victoria.

Galbally Report (1978), *see* Review of Post-arrival Programs and Services to Migrants 1978.

Gill, P. N. (1965), 'The Federal Science Grants Scheme: An episode in Church-State relations in Australia, 1963-64', in E. L. French (ed.)(1965), *Melbourne Studies in Education 1964*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Gregory, J. A. (1973), *Church and State*, Cassell, North Melbourne.

Grundy, D. (1972), *Secular, Compulsory and Free*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Habermas, J. (1979), *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, Beacon Press, Boston.

Hinkson, J. (1981), 'The under-society', *Arena* 58, 1-5.

Hinkson, J. (1984), 'Assimilation or multiculturalism: A false dilemma', *Arena* **67**, 7-11.

Karmel Report (1973), *see* Australian Schools Commission (1973).

Lawson, H. (1957), *The Men Who Made Australia*, Australasian Book Society, Melbourne.

McQueen, H. (1970), *A New Britannia*, Penguin, Ringwood.

Martin Report (1964), *see* Australian Universities Commission (1964).

Martin, A. W. (1964), 'Economic influences via the "New Federation Movement"', *Historical Studies*, Selected Artists First Series (compiled by J. J. Eastwood and F. B. Smith) pp. 215-25.

Murray Report (1957), see Committee on Australian Universities (1957).

Pledger, P. J. (1961), 'The Common Schools Board, 1862-1872', in A. G. Austin (ed.), *Melbourne Studies in Education 1959-1960*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, pp. 95-114.

Quality of Education Review Committee (Report, P. Karmel, Chairman)(1985), *Quality of Education in Australia*, AGPS, Canberra.

Review of Post-arrival Programs and Services to Migrants (F. E. Galbally, Chairman) (1978), *Migrant Services and Programs*, vol. 1, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

Rizvi, F. (1985), *Multiculturalism as an Educational Policy* (ESA842 Policy Development and Analysis), Deakin University Press, Geelong.

Scott, E. (1936), *A History of the University of Melbourne*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Sedunary, E. (1975), Unpublished B.Ed. essay, La Trobe University.

Sharp, G. (1969), 'In defence of nothing', *Arena* **19**, 1-4.

Sharp, G. (1970), 'Authority and the university', *Arena* **21**, 1-2.

Sharp, G. (1973), 'Liberation incorporated?' *Arena* **32-33**, 1-7.

Sharp, G. (1985), 'Constitutive abstraction and social practice', *Arena* **70**, 48-82.

Sharp, G. & White, D. (1968), 'Features of the intellectually trained', *Arena* **15**, 30-3.

Sharp, N. (1979), 'Ruled out of society', *Arena* **53**, 1-8.

Shaw, A. G. L. (1955), *The Story of Australia*, Faber, London.

Smart, D. (1978), *Federal Aid to Australian Schools*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia.

South Australia (1971), *See* Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia, (1971).

Tannock, P. (1971), 'The development of the Commonwealth government's role in Australian education', *The Forum of Education*, **XXX**(2), 152-5.

Tannock, P. D. (1975), *The Government of Education in Australia: The Origins of Federal Policy*, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands.

Tannock, P. D. & Birch, I. K. (1973), 'Defining the limits of Commonwealth education power: The Drummond case, the federal government and the universities', in S. Murray-Smith (ed.), *Melbourne Studies in Education 1973*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Turner, I. (1974), '1914-1919', in F. K. Crowley (ed.), *A New History of Australia*, Heinemann, Melbourne.

Victoria (1984), *see* Education Department, Victoria (1984).

Victoria (1986), *see* Education Department, Victoria (1986).

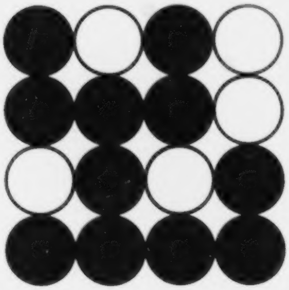
Wark, I. W. (1977), 'Colleges of Advanced Education and the Commission on Advanced Education', in Birch & Smart (eds), *The Commonwealth Government and Education 1964-1976: Political Initiatives and Developments*, Drummond, Victoria.

White, D. (1967), 'Skills without learning', *Arena* 14, 25-33.

White, D. (1972), 'Education and capitalism', in J. Playford & D. Kirsner (eds), *Australian Capitalism*, Penguin, Ringwood, pp. 219-47.

White, D. (1973), 'Create your own compliance: The Karmel prospect', *Arena* 32-33, 35-48.

Readings



1

Education and capitalism

Copied by Deakin University in
accordance with s.53B of the *Copyright
Act* 1968, on 15 November 1986.

All the old organizational structures of education, and many of the traditionally held beliefs, have been shaken and confused within the past ten or fifteen years. The shocks have been greatest at the secondary and tertiary levels of education; the primary school developments have been more gradual, and conflict there so far less developed. The immediate cause of problems at the higher levels of education is thought by some to be the introduction of mass secondary education and the resultant enormous increase in the numbers of students at tertiary level. The numbers expansion has certainly brought about organizational and financial problems; however, there are factors more basic than this which underlie both the expansion and the problems, particularly the transformation of the productive processes which Australia, like other industrially developed countries, is undergoing. The so-called technological revolution means that the workforce, an increasing proportion of which is required to have scientific or other intellectually-derived skills, is to a growing extent trained in the schools. One of the first noticeable changes in the structure of the workforce is the increase in the number of teachers. The change in their outlook, as shown in the political and professional activity of secondary school teachers in recent years, could well be an indication of an emerging pattern of radical thought and action.

No revolution has occurred in education. There has been, however, a modernization, an adaptation of the organization, control and curriculum of the schools, colleges and universities, to the changed needs of capitalist society – a change which has brought about problems and conflicts among those who accept capitalist society. McFarlane has elsewhere referred to 'a doctrinaire, irresponsible hatred of economic planning on the part of the Federal government and its Treasury chiefs'.[1] The same attitude has prevailed in education. Planning and government intervention is not a policy which is characteristic of the Left. On the vanguard right of the political spectrum the production of a 'grand design' for Australia has been demanded of the government.[2] Perhaps it is the general distrust of intellectuals of any sort that makes it easier for the conservatives of both major parliamentary parties to resist a conscious acceptance of a planning approach, even when the centralized control of modern capitalism makes this both possible and a requirement of its further development. In any case, throughout education, at the political and administrative levels, among educational theorists and in schools, there are differences between conservatives and modernizers. Anti-intellectualism has a double effect, particularly when it is allied, as in the Australian tradition, with a reverence for bureaucracy and an acceptance of government intervention in social affairs. The faltering steps of the Federal government in its intervention in education, previously a matter for State governments and private bodies, have received a generally uncritical welcome. In halting fashion an educational transformation has proceeded, linking the universities together into a peculiarly Australian version of the American multiversity; establishing the beginning of a stratified system of tertiary education with the Colleges of Advanced Education as a second layer; restructuring the old state and private secondary schools into a stratified and commonly controlled system; introducing curriculum changes which stress the wider teaching of intellectual skills and a conscious acceptance of the goals of the social system; and grafting new methods of talent selection onto the traditional class-bound basis.

---

[1] Bruce McFarlane, 'Challenging the Control of the Australian Economic System', in Richard Gordon (ed.), *The Australian New Left*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1970, p. 95.

[2] *News-Weekly*, 24 March 1971.

There is opposition to the changes, quite apart from the conflicts between conservatives and modernizers. Since the new education requires an approach to planning and human resources different from those traditionally held, the capitalist class cannot lead effectively nor can the old working class easily propose alternatives. It is from the intellectual stratum that the inspiration for changes emanates. In what amounts to a manifesto for capitalist development one of the bright young management theorists writes of the future: 'During the early seventies corporate planning, which of course remains centralized, becomes far more deliberate, formal and detailed. It increasingly involves skills of a research nature, and makes greater use of mathematical models for simulation of business processes.'[3] Naturally enough many of these technocratic planners are impatient with laissez-faire liberals, but the conflict is on means, not ends. The more basic opposition to the changes in education and society also comes from the intellectual stratum, and the groups related to it – from students (particularly in universities) and some high school teachers. Any theory of education, or of social conflict, must explain why this is so if it is to be at all satisfactory.

Education is at the centre of a new contradiction, an irreconcilable conflict (or potential conflict) within all capitalist or bureaucratically-managed societies. The constant revolutionization of the means of production in the long-industrialized countries has harnessed science and intellectual technique generally to production and its consequences, distribution and manipulation. Often it has been outside the Left that the change has been first noticed. Bell observed that '. . . the university will become the central institution of the next hundred years because of its role as the new

---

3. Devon Mills, 'The General Scenario', in Devon Mills (ed.), *Australian Management and Society, 1970–1985*, Penguin Books, 1971, p. 30.

source of innovation and knowledge'.[4] But the emphasis on new ideas becomes dangerous for capitalism. The media, as Enzensberger points out, depend upon

> men capable of innovation, in other words, on potential trouble-makers. It is inherent in the process of creation that there is no way to predict its results. Consequently, intellectuals are, from the point of view of any power structure bent on its own perpetuation, a security risk. It takes consummate skill to 'handle' them and neutralize their subversive influence.[5]

Ideas are in themselves not subversive. Someone has to produce them, to accept them, and to act upon them. The social formation which produces new intellectual production is decisive, given the importance which modern society puts upon it and its products. In general in the production of ideas, men enter, of their choosing, into co-operative relations with others. The problems which are worked upon must be felt to be problems by those who attempt to solve them, and in this venture people need the information and ideas of others, which they consciously seek. The essence of this social structure is that it is not imposed from above, but made by those in it; and that it is a co-operative network of autonomous persons. It is not a social system of the kind commonly described, in which men adopt roles made for them in pre-existing patterns. No institutional home for this social structure is that it is not imposed from above, but imagine that any institution yet in existence could be appropriate. Yet this 'intellectual culture' provides the alternative society, the alternative set of values or world view in such places as universities, other tertiary and, to a degree, secondary educational institutions. This is not to suggest that all those who are educated are trained to be creative. The education is generally designed to produce more flexible workers, people who are more adaptable rather than critical. But the reason and source of that adaptability and flexibility is the increasing use of abstracted knowledge and technique in work. The new workforce is intellectually trained, rather than intellectual. It uses the knowledge and skills produced by the intellectual and to an increasing extent adopts its culture and 'ideology'. In the work-place, as in the educational institution, the clash between class authority and values on the one hand, and those of personal autonomy within a co-operative network of relationships on the other, is the basis of conflict.

---

[4] Daniel Bell, 'Notes on the Post-Industrial Society (1)', *Public Interest*, no. 6, Winter 1967, p. 30.

[5] Hans Magnus Enzensberger, 'The Industrialization of the Mind', *Partisan Review*, vol. XXVI, Winter 1969, p. 109.

This expansion of the intellectually-trained workforce, along with the increase in numbers of teachers' educational institutions, is carried through by the modernizers under the theoretical notion of the need for 'human capital'.

> *Education as a vehicle for investment* is of importance to the economist. The education process stores up skills and knowledge in people and these add to the productive capacity of the economy. Such investment is referred to as investment in *human capital*. Human capital strictly consists of something more than the *stock* of education services. It may be taken as consisting essentially of *schooling, learning on the job, advances in health, and the growing stock of information about the economy*. Clearly, education is of critical importance in this concept.[6]

The notion of 'human capital' became a matter of official thought when the Martin Report[7] adopted it in 1964 as a foundation of its proposals for the further development of tertiary education. Like many other official committees this one had a quota of academics who expressed, at any rate publicly, no fears or reservations about the conversion (or attempted conversion) of higher educational institutions into capital production factories, themselves into foremen, and their students into potential units of 'human capital'. No critical study has been made in Australia of the role played by academics in the metamorphosis of the 'communities of scholars' of their own rhetoric into part of the government apparatus backing private capital. Professors, already incorporated into institutions through the rewards of status and high income, have readily seized the opportunity to extend their power and status in the bureaucratization of the universities.[8] The rare exceptions amongst them draw their views from the non-institutionalized culture outlined above.

---

[6] D. A. Archbold, 'Economics and Education', in A. G. Maclaine and R. Selby Smith (eds), *Fundamental Issues in Australian Education*, Novak, Sydney, 1971, p. 103. See also Doug White, 'Skills Without Learning', in S. D'Urso (ed.), *Counterpoints: Critical Writings in Australian Education*, John Wiley, Sydney, 1971.

[7] *Report of the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia to the Australian Universities Commission* (Martin Report), 1964.

Federal Government's Actions

The remarkable thing about the policies of the Federal government in education is how much was achieved at so little cost, without anything much seeming to be done. The Federal government has intervened in education in such a way as to transform the pattern of control utterly, and has set new goals. This has been done extremely cheaply, and almost without opposition. Tertiary education has become integrated within itself, and made more directly dependent on government; stratification has been introduced, or expanded and systematized. Secondary education has likewise moved a long way towards becoming an Australia-wide system – the private schools forming an upper stratum – with government intervention in curriculum and selection. Federal government assistance is given preferentially to non-state schools. The first Australia-wide curriculum project (backed by Federal money), the Australian Science Education Project, is now in action. As the old public examinations are being reduced in number and importance, new selection tests are being introduced. In these changes the Federal government has no doubt been assisted by the traditional Australian habit of accepting and even seeking government intervention in all service activities; and more particularly by (a) unionists and parents calling for more money for education, but without raising the questions of control, (b) efficiency-minded academics,[9] and (c) other academics who freely came forward when called, and who apparently happily proceeded to plan for their own destruction.

---

[8] See Paul Hoch, *Academic Freedom in Action*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1970, for overseas exemplification of the process.

The Commonwealth government came into education rather later than circumstances demanded it: indeed, its first efforts were almost forced upon it. During the Second World War the Commonwealth was forced to assist students in order to increase rapidly the number of technically-trained people required for defence purposes; university enrolments doubled between 1939 and 1946.[10] The war brought about changes within Australia in some ways similar to those brought about in the United States by the launching of Sputnik. The importance of education was forced upon the government, and hastened the trend to centralization and state control of education. The Labor government of the immediate post-war period did not however continue with moves towards Commonwealth intervention. The Commonwealth Office of Education was set up in 1945, but it had only an advisory function; in the unsuccessful referendum of 1944, education did not even figure in the proposals which were made for the transfer of many powers to the Commonwealth. The Liberal Party opposition also took the view that education was a State matter, and not to be interfered with, at any level. The universities could not do without the assistance that they received during the war, particularly as inflation reduced the value of the older sources of their income. In 1950 the

[9] See for example E. L. Wheelwright, 'Costs, Returns and Investment in Education', *Australian Journal of Higher Education*, vol. 1, no. 3, November 1963, p. 10, where he says that it is time we began to regard education as an *industry*, and acted accordingly.

[10] A. M. Badcock, 'Federalism and Education in Australia', unpublished M.A. thesis, Monash University, 1969. Much of the factual material which follows comes from this thesis.

Commonwealth government appointed a committee under the late Professor R. C. Mills to examine and report upon the financial requirements of the universities. Commonwealth grants to the States following this rose from $2,947,000 in 1951–2 to $5,987,000 in 1957–8.[11] The grants to the universities via the State governments were in general without restrictions on the use to be made of them. In the following period the financial pressures on the universities increased, and their importance in the community increased. On the lower levels of education, a public campaign for Federal aid for education was mounted and received considerable public support. Ironically, this campaign – which was begun largely on the initiative of Left union officials and militant rank-and-file members of the teachers' unions and parents' organizations – provided the popular basis for government policies. Something like this is a possible outcome of the present arguments about equality of educational opportunity.[12] In the interests of those about whom most promoters of equality claim to be concerned, campaigners for equality need also to campaign about the control and direction of education.

In 1958 the policy of the Commonwealth government on universities changed. In 1957 the Committee on Australian Universities, under the chairmanship of Sir Keith Murray, had inquired and reported on the needs of universities. In 1958 the State Grants (Universities) Act began operation, and authorized a payment to universities to a maximum of $42,800,000 over the triennium 1958–60. In 1959, also in implementation of a recommendation in the Murray Report, the Australian Universities Commission was established. By now efficiency was becoming the keynote, and control was becoming established outside of the universities. As the Murray Report said:

---

[11] *Commonwealth Payments To or For the States*, 1967–8, Table 47, p. 85. Quoted by Badcock, op. cit., p. 154.

[12] See for example Tom Roper, *The Myth of Equality*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1971, and Doug White, 'Promoting Equality', *Arena*, no. 23, 1970.

> There must be collaboration, co-operation and co-ordination between the universities, the Commonwealth Government and the State Governments . . . it appears to us that the day is past when planning of university development can be left entirely to individual institutions or confined within the boundaries of one State. We consider, therefore, that the time is now ripe for a permanent Australian University Grants Committee.[13]

The Australian Universities Act (1959) specifically makes the point: '14. (1) The Commission shall perform its functions with a view to promoting the balanced development of universities so that their resources can be used to the greatest possible advantage of Australia.' The Commonwealth government was still confining itself to the universiites, but public support for Federal aid to education at the school level continued. In March 1961, for example, a petition with 241,000 signatures asking for an emergency financial grant to the States for education was presented to the Prime Minister.[14] It was still three years before the Commonwealth government found an appropriate way of responding to this demand. In the first stages of Commonwealth government intervention in tertiary education the universities had been given unconditional grants, but nevertheless grants which made them dependent upon governments. The Murray Report marked a second stage of rationalization – effectively, the conversion of all Australian universities into branches of a centralized agency. The third stage reinforced this tendency, and went one further with the establishment of an hierarchical system of tertiary education, the announcement of this development coming with the Martin Report of 1964. The conclusions and recommendations included two highly significant points:

> 1. (v) Education should be regarded as an investment which yields direct and significant economic benefits through increas-

---

[13] *Report of the Committee on Australian Universities* (Murray Report), 1957, p. 98.

[14] *Review of Education in Australia 1955–1962*, ACER, Melbourne, 1964, p. 62.

> **ing the skill of the population and through accelerating technological progress. The Committee believes that economic growth in Australia is dependent upon a high and advancing level of education .... .**
>
> **1. (vii) The Committee has framed its recommendations with the object of widening the range of educational opportunities beyond the secondary school, of providing extensive vocational and specialized training and of ensuring that Australia makes a worthwhile contribution to the advancement of knowledge and of achievement.[15]**

Since then it has become even more firmly established that education is a form of national investment, that it should be at the service of capitalism, and that it should exist in a stratified form. In 1967 Mr J. G. Gorton, then Minister for Education and Science, said that universities might have to account to parliament for their spending.[16] In 1968 Sir Alan Westerman, then Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of Trade and Industry, said: 'Industrialists would normally ask what the market was, and fashion their product accordingly. But the academics were turning out graduates without considering the needs of industry, business and society in general.'[17] The Commonwealth government is able, through its control of finance, to determine that tertiary education follows the path designated. But it has not had to defend its policies within the universities because there has been no worthwhile resistance to them from academics. It is a reflection of the cultural weakness of Australian intellectuals that the government has had no trouble finding collaborators for its policies. Whereas academics in the United States are sometimes said to be corrupted by the acceptance of business and defence contracts, in Australia corruption takes the form of accepting the status and power that goes in assisting governments to take control of education. It is, however, better to regard them as corrupted beforehand – corrupted through the power of status within the university, and with the assumption of a symbiotic relationship with the government as a continuation of this power.

---

[15] Martin Report, vol. 1, p. 1.
[16] *Australian*, 20 March 1967.
[17] *Herald*, 5 June 1968.

At the secondary school level, the actions of the Commonwealth have been even more tardy but just as effective and at even less financial cost. Through state aid and scholarships, the private schools are being integrated into a nation-wide system of education, forming an upper level ensuring the maintenance of stratification but with more opportunity for the bright poor to achieve an education. Through the allocation of money to curriculum projects, firstly in the sciences and almost certainly soon through the social sciences, the curriculum is being made more uniform, so that social control now comes not only through the methods of coercion, class allegiance and religion but also through the content of curriculum. State aid to private schools, combined with the poverty of the state schools, has made the private schools both more attractive and more financially accessible to many parents. State poverty has limited the independence of the old State bureaucracies and diminished the influence of a potential opposition to the modernization policies of the Commonwealth Ministry of Education. The first Commonwealth action at secondary level was the introduction of the Commonwealth Secondary Scholarships on 19 May 1964, in fulfilment of a 1963 election promise. The scholarships were a 'payment of £100 a year to the parent or guardian for the maintenance of the child and a payment of up to £100 towards the cost of school fees and books'.[18] The scholarships were thus a means of preferentially supporting the fee-paying schools, for allowances to parents of children at these schools were made greater; they were also a means of introducing selection by merit – there was, by governmental decision, no means test It was also required that the examinations should be marked, not by individual schools, but externally. The schools, at least in Victoria, had begun a policy of reducing the examinations load, particularly external examinations. They no longer had the freedom to do this, without either advocating that students ignore the scholarships, or running a campaign against them. So far this has not been done. As a side effect of the Commonwealth Scholarship scheme, the influence of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) increased enormously. ACER was the body which set the examinations and marked them; it had long since developed the ideology of efficiency above all, and believed in the role of the expert. With the development of capitalism, the revolution in production techniques which enhanced the expert, ACER came into its own. It has also been one of the chief influences assisting the transformation of education in the direction chosen by the Commonwealth government.[19] In the election of 1963, the Commonwealth government also promised to introduce assistance to all secondary schools in the provision of facilities to teach science, and in May 1964 took steps to put this promise into effect. £5 million annually was made available, in the proportion of numbers of children attending, to state and non-state schools. Grants available to state schools were subject to the conditions that items on which they were spent were to be 'clearly identifiable in the State Budget' and were to be regarded as 'supplementary and additional to sums which the State would normally provide for education'.[20] Again the Commonwealth pursued its policies, for which there was some public support, in a limited manner which cost it little but established precedents while further testing out public opinion, and did this in such a way as to give it further control as against the control previously exerted by State governments or by older institutions such as the church. The Commonwealth government has since followed up these early initiatives. A body to design science curriculum materials suitable for the whole of Australia – the Australian Science Education Project – has been set up, and direct grants to non-state schools have been increased.

---

[18] *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, 19 May 1964, p. 2034.

---

[19] See Doug White, 'Consuming Interest in Education', *Arena*, no. 24, 1971.

[20] *Commonwealth Parliamentary Debates*, House of Representatives, 5 March 1964, p. 341.

The extent of centralization of control of the universities and the reduction in status of several campuses with a head office in Canberra is shown in a recent report of the Australian Universities Commission.[21] The Commission made no recommendations on a proposal from the University College of Townsville that it should establish a Research Institute of Marine Science – that was left until the Commonwealth government had decided whether the establishment of such an Institute would be desirable. Likewise, for similar reasons, the Commission made no recommendations on proposals for education in business management. Whether or not these activities are desirable is not the issue here; the point is that a centralized agency allocates funds and makes decisions about the development of all the universities. Furthermore, it has adopted a policy of conceding to the government the right to make basic policies and even some detailed ones. Local university administrators seem to have accepted their branch status. For example, it became a matter of public knowledge and a cause of student action in 1971 when the three Melbourne universities adopted a similar policy of each excluding students who had been expelled or were suspended from another university; this required, as far as one can ascertain, no instruction from above. The university administrations felt themselves to be part of a school system and acted accordingly.

While universities are the top layer of tertiary education, the Colleges of Advanced Education are a second layer. Their introduction, which included the amalgamation of some previously existing institutions, has been done for purely instrumental reasons. As an official report notes: 'The colleges were set up with the main object of providing specialized training for vocations and it follows that a close and continuous association must be maintained between col-

---

21. *Australian Universities Commission*, Fourth Report, 1969, p iii.

lege staffs and industry on the one hand, and government and business houses on the other.'[22] The colleges, the report says, are to have their primary emphasis on teaching; as a general rule, research is not encouraged. In intention the colleges were to serve directly business and government, and to be kept at a distance from any creative intellectual work. The justification of the colleges also required the acceptance of a theoretical proposition of a different kind of mind among some students:

> Students entering colleges of advanced education will tend to have a different outlook and different needs from these attending the universities, being more interested in the application than in the development of knowledge.[23]

The State Governments

All States but one have in recent years spawned reports on education, especially secondary education. Most are known best by the name of the chairman of their particular committee of enquiry; Wyndham (N.S.W., 1951)[24], Dettman (W.A., 1969) [25], The School in Society (Tas., 1968)[26], Karmel (S.A., 1971) [27], and Radford (Qld., 1970) [28]. The absence of a report in Victoria does not mean that no changes are afoot there; they are occurring in a non-official manner, a point to which I shall return.

---

[22] *First Report of the Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Advanced Education*, 1966, p. 23.

[23] ibid., p. 22.

[24] *Report on the Committee Appointed to Survey Secondary Education in New South Wales* (Wyndham Report), 1957.

[25] *Report on the Committee on Secondary Education* (Dettman Report), Education Department of Western Australia, Perth, 1969.

[26] *The School in Society*, Education Department of Tasmania, 1968. See also the 'Minority Report' in K. A. Thomas, 'A Report on the Role of the School in Society', *Tasmanian Journal of Education*, vol. 4, nos 1, 2, 3, 1970.

[27] *Report of Committee of Enquiry into Education in South Australia* (Karmel Report), Government Printer, Adelaide, 1971.

[28] *Public Examinations for Queensland Secondary School Students* (Radford Report), Department of Education, Brisbane, 1970.

The reports vary; that from South Australia is instructive as an example of the modernizing professional approach to education. A great deal of the report is concerned with efficiency. It is recommended, for example, that increased pay should be given to those teachers with honours and higher degrees; that study leave should be introduced for teachers; that class sizes be reduced; that high and technical schools be replaced by schools of a single type; that two ancillary staff be employed for every five teachers; and that all regulations under the education act should be reviewed to eliminate those not essential to the smooth running of the school and which may limit the exercise of initiative at school level. While the state secondary schools are to become less bureaucratically controlled, the non-state schools are to be enticed into the system. All teachers, the report recommends, should be registered by a board, which is to be representative of the Education Department, non-department schools, the teachers' organization and the training institutions. Non-government schools should be registered when they reach certain standards, and only registered schools should normally receive assistance. These propositions, if carried out, would certainly improve the conditions of teaching in South Australia. The meaning which the committee of enquiry intended for these recommendations is not just that – or, rather, the improvement is for a particular purpose and kind of education. 'We are not concerned', the report says, 'with a general statement on the aims of education but with the function which schools are expected to fulfil in South Australia.'[29] The schools, it continues, are set up by society to impart essential knowledge and to develop skills and abilities necessary to operate in that society. The social context operating in South Australia is characterized by parliamentary democracy (the enquiry was begun in the period of government of the Liberal-Country League, elected by a gerrymandered minority vote), a rising standard of living, increased leisure and a rising tide of expectation – a context which requires a

[29] Karmel Report, p. 25.

modernization of the use of potential abilities in future workers, and their greater initiative; in fact, it needs their voluntary acquiescence and participation in the social system. Children need to know about society, including conflicts and how these are resolved. Schooling should not end at a particular stage, for students need to acquire the abilities and will to go on learning.

The South Australian enquirers seem to be well aware of the needs of education in modern capitalist society, and that this requires the professionalization of the teacher. Professional teachers, unlike those who laboured within the rule-ridden bureaucracies of the past, are willing and eager to do the things which 'society' demands of them – they have initiative, can be trusted, and need to be rewarded with status and 'professional conditions'. It is quite likely that the recommendations will not be fully carried out, at least in the short run. There is much opposition to changes of this kind – bureaucrats defend their traditional privileges, and poor planning by the Federal government will make too little finance available. Socialist educationists would be unwise to join the reformists in merely pushing for the changes recommended in the report. The assumptions made therein need to be criticized, and alternatives proposed, before any are put into effect.

Not all of the recent enquiries and reports in education have produced analyses and recommendations of this kind. Some are more conservative, but the general trend is in the direction of the South Australian proposals. One may compare them with the conservative and not untypical statement of a director-general of education in a ministerial report to the Western Australian State parliament in 1965:

> The lower forms of the Secondary School aim to produce good citizens, for after three years there, more than 70 per cent of the students in a year group leave school. Hence the high school aims to continue the development of proficiency in the skill subjects, to widen the pupil's knowledge by the study of social studies, science, health education, social problems, literature,

etc. . . . The fourth and fifth year classes in the main follow an academic-type syllabus leading to the Leaving Examination and Matriculation.[30]

Curriculum Changes

A good deal of what has been said above has a direct bearing on curriculum, and it is still rather too early to do more than to indicate trends. What students learn in schools is as much, or more, a consequence of the organization and teaching style of the institution as it is of the content of courses of study. One needs to look at curriculum as the totality of the social relationships within the school, and those between the school and 'the authorities', i.e. as a social organization of communication and interaction. The content of the communication is also important, but it is in accord with the social structure in which that content is transmitted.

Three models of curriculum can be abstracted from Australian education. The first is that of top-down instructions, prescribed courses of study and textbooks, external examinations, fully-occupied student time, rigid rules of conduct for teachers and students, inspection and checking from above. In this kind of system, students learn that it is necessary to abide by the rules, that coercion is a fact of life and that knowledge is something objective and in the possession of the authorities. This is the kind of school education which is everywhere passing away, although not without its death spasms, as the frequent battles in high schools over such issues as hair length and uniforms indicate. The kind of theory and research which accords with this makes assumptions, for example, about fixed abilities, and is concerned with the best methods of getting knowledge across.

A second model can be built around the idea of the professional teacher, a more independent, flexible and widely knowledgeable person. There is more doubt now about certainties in knowledge, and prescribed syllabuses and external examinations are regarded as of doubtful validity. The social and educational systems are still accepted as given, but students must be prepared for a variety of roles within them – even ones which do not yet exist. Social consensus is still taken to be both valid and 'right', but conflict and change are important in establishing it. The emphasis changes from agreed 'content' in knowledge and courses of study, to agreed skills and methods which are supposed to equip students to operate in a variety of institutionalized roles. Some study of society is introduced into the curriculum. Old-style examinations become replaced by tests of developed ability, still externally set, with those developed by the ACER for the Commonwealth Secondary Scholarship Examinations as a prototype. Selection of students is based upon their skills, and also upon the willingness of students to participate within the framework laid down for them. As in many other ways, the Australian National University leads here, and has already begun its selection of students based partly on the opinion of secondary schools on the 'suitability' of their students. Educational research helps by investigating the structure of the disciplines, identifying abilities, the personality characteristics of students and teachers which correlate with success, and the nature of the classroom interaction which promotes active participation by students. This kind of education is emerging throughout Australia.

---

[30] 'Report of the Education Department of Western Australia 1965', in *Proceedings of Parliament and Papers 1966*, Government Printer, Perth, 1967, vol. II, p. 7.

A third model lurks within the second and to a certain extent has always been present in education even if only in the outlying areas of the honours section of some university departments, in 'progressive' private schools and in kindergartens. Knowledge, and social organization in general, is regarded as a social product. The essential characteristics of the development of abstract, general understanding are that those involved in their production are working on problems that concern them, that in this they make contact with others who have something to offer in the solution of them, and that this is not hampered by authority or the definition of the area of work by experts. In such an education the separation of teacher and student roles becomes blurred, for all are learning, although they will bring different experience and abstractions from that experience to the situation. Social arrangements are made, in principle, by the participants – they do not fit into previously-defined role patterns. Such an approach to education leads into irreconcilable conflict with imposed authority patterns. The problems which this model poses for theory and practice are, for example: how do teachers go about setting up the conditions for its development; what are the appropriate experiences which produce problems for investigation; what is to be done about the institutions, authority structures and social system in which this education is developing but which prevent its full emergence?

The social sciences syllabuses of schools show some of the pattern of change; as the name has changed from social studies to social science, so has the pattern of indoctrination. The comment made by Firth about N.S.W. primary schools of 1880-1914 could have been made about schools, primary or secondary, anywhere in Australia:

> The underlying continuity remained, of respectable schools giving children 'proper' ideas of conduct and 'proper' attitudes to important issues: Australia's obligation to Britain, the true meaning of patriotism, the glory of war, Britain's place in history, the difference between good literature and bad, the hierarchy of races, the causes of progress. About subjects such as these the public schools offered their pupils something more than mere facts, they offered them the 'truth'.[31]

The comment refers to the educational reforms of 1904, which changed many things, but the reformers did not question their 'own unspoken assumptions, reflected in the values with which public schools confronted children.' This is still the case as far as the officials of education are concerned: only the techniques have changed – but that in itself is fundamental. For the new techniques are built upon the 'rationality' which is the basis of capitalism's continuing rush to the ultimate irrationality of nuclear war and global pollution, or revolution. The questions asked of children in 1911, and for many years on either side of that date, were of the type: 'How would you answer a boy from a foreign country if he were to ask you why you are proud to belong to the British Empire? Give reasons.' The new approach to giving children the 'correct' ideas will probably be in line with that on the way in the United States.[32] As an American writer says:

---

[31] S. G. Firth, 'Social Values in the New South Wales Primary School 1880–1914: An Analysis of School Texts', in R. J. W. Selleck (ed.), *Melbourne Studies in Education 1970*, Melbourne University Press, 1970, p. 125.

> The discussion of communism in the public secondary schools should be analytical and reasonably objective and should treat communism in a context of other 'isms' (capitalism, fascism and socialism). Teachers should have a solid background for teaching the subject.
>
> Complete objectivity in teaching is probably impossible, but helping the student to reason for himself is crucial. The successful brainwashing of some American soldiers during the Korean conflict attests to the inadequacy of restricting teaching to providing black-and-white answers. Many soldiers were unable to critically analyze and evaluate apparently convincing arguments when they were presented with unfamiliar premises.

The author goes on to assure teachers that they need not fear the subversion of American youth, who will be able to make the right judgements, provided they are given 'the methods and materials to do so'.[33]

Some of these methods are illustrated by the educational games favoured in overseas journals of late. None of the simulation games seem quite as exciting as 'Monopoly', and they are probably no more effective than that game was in teaching the Henry George principles for which it was invented. Their effect is more likely, along with a lot of other features of modern capitalist society, to get across the message that life is a game, something to be watched from the outside, something to analyze and to give advice to players on, but something one doesn't get involved in too wholeheartedly – a sort of hybrid affair between the playboy club and the Sunday morning football warmover. Intellectual skills are taught, within the context of a social system taken for granted.

---

[32] See for example N. J. Holland, 'Developing a Model for Teaching', in D. G. Dufty (ed.), *Teaching About Society*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1970, pp. 76–80.

[33] Richard I. Miller, 'Implications of International Affairs for the School Program', in Jonathon C. McLendon (ed.), *Readings on Social Studies in Secondary Education*, Macmillan, New York, 1966, p. 187.

> 'Ulster in Your Hands' is a game designed for current affairs students. It starts with the conflicting ideas and differing shades of opinion found in the present Ulster scene, and presents them to students who will try to produce a reasonable solution. In doing this, we hope that students will see more clearly the difficulties of the Government and the demands of the varying opposing and supporting factions.[34]

No doubt points were lost by players who dared to take the 'game' seriously, and who got concerned that in Ulster people were actually getting killed.

It is relatively easy to keep emotion out of learning facts, but it is more difficult to do so when some elements of creativity are to be preserved in education. From the point of view of those seeking stability in society, it is not real creativity that is required – flexibility is more like it. But even in order to produce this, some of the social conditions for creativity – the third model of education – are being created. The expansion of the intellectually-trained workforce demands also the expansion of the intellectual culture.

The Opposition

In the fifties and early sixties the chief activity within education of socialists and other critics of capitalist society was concerned with material conditions. This was the period of campaigns for Federal aid for education, of meetings and petitions about conditions in particular schools. That sort of action continues, notably in much of the current writing about inequality in education.[35] (The characteristic feature of this kind of activity is that education is regarded as a quantity, something of common value, the more of which people get the better. It neglects to question the *kind* of education, its social uses and whom it serves.) The effect of much of the action of those years was to supply a popular basis for modernization which has done little to change anything in a direction which socialists would want. There is now a radical wing to the modernization trend which at times goes beyond modernization: I refer to teachers and some other educationists who, while actively dismantling the old control system of bureaucratic regulation, external examinations and inspectorial systems, have gone ahead to produce the beginnings of a different kind of education.

---

[34] *Times Educational Supplement*, 19 June 1970.

State secondary education in Victoria provides the best available example so far of mass radical action, including curriculum reform and organizational change, both initiated by teachers. The Victorian secondary teachers are organized in an association independent from that of primary teachers, as are now also the technical teachers. In its early years the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association (VSTA), which began as The Victorian Secondary Masters' Professional Association (VSMPA), was very much concerned with status and differentiation from primary teachers. The first president of the VSMPA wrote that

> . . . official Victorian Teachers' Union policy ignores the special claims of secondary teachers, and aims among other things, for 'equal pay for primary and secondary'. Could the VTU justify this basic principle on the grounds that equal qualifications are necessary for promotion (class for class) in the two branches of the service, or because preparation of work, examination cor-

---

[35] See footnote 12.

> rection and responsibility are equal in the two branches! Of course it couldn't, but it does not have to.[36]

This concern with status, the need for public recognition of the different nature of work of secondary teachers, and the demand for a salary margin for the secondary teachers is manifest all through the early issues of the *Secondary Teacher*. By 1964, however, a new note was becoming apparent, and the VSTA was no longer so ready to consent to the generally accepted goals of the education system. The challenge to the system was beginning to be made. The editor of the *Secondary Teacher* wrote:

> The sixteen years history of the VSTA has been marked by many severe struggles with the entrenched powers which control state education. This is not surprising, as with the rapid expansion of the secondary service the Association has become more important and has naturally requested that it have greater opportunities to express its views on secondary education. But this right has not been easily won, because the controlling triangle of Department, Tribunal and VTU was well established when the VSTA was formed. While the Department has willingly recognized the Association's right to speak for secondary teachers, it has not been so receptive to the view that teachers' organizations should have a say on broader issues such as the curriculum.[37]

Within a few years of this statement, Victorian secondary education became probably one of the most adventurous in the world, with the particular characteristic that the new developments came from schools rather than from the authorities or experts. In the 'general studies' programmes, or some of them, an education based upon the social relationships of the intellectual culture began to appear. But the old status-seeking professionalism of the VSTA still existed; the strike at Melbourne High School – the school in which the VSMPA began – in February 1971 had mixed motives, but the major one was still the insistence that secondary teachers were not getting the status they deserved. Militancy, here as elsewhere, does not always imply socialist attitudes. It appears that the struggle around the kind of things that go on in schools is more likely to produce an understanding of the nature of modern capitalist society and alternatives to it. In particular, this kind of struggle makes a link with those struggles sometimes carried out within the universities. So far, however, the only university where this kind of action has been consistently pursued is the University of Queensland.[38]

---

[36] *Secondary Teacher*, no. 1, 1949.

[37] Bill Hannan, 'A Long Struggle with Entrenched Powers', *Secondary Teacher*, no. 92, February 1964.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Victoria is the only State which has not produced in recent years an official report giving new directions to education. The Curriculum Advisory Board (CAB) for secondary schools, which was set up in 1966 on the initiative of Mr R. A. Reed, Director of Secondary Education, had its purpose defined as being 'to examine the first four years of secondary education and to define the principles on which organization, curriculum, procedure and assessment should be based'.[39] The CAB moved in a distinctive fashion, although the idea of producing a report was not abandoned for some time; after several attempts to define aims, it decided to promote change instead. Certain principles were gradually developed – most importantly, that teachers and schools should fit the needs of the curriculum and teaching, that co-operative styles of work are to be preferred to the competitive, and that students should be active and interested participants.[40] Many schools responded, and it is necessary to visit schools to see the work of the CAB – that work is, indeed, the work of teachers and children. The theoretical work of the CAB has been of the kind which has promoted practice, an analysis of that practice and, significantly, an analysis of some of the disciplines particularly in terms of their human, social structure. None of this in the 'report' style; the CAB has preferred to circulate signed articles, without any stamp of approval other than that the material seems worth circulating.

---

[38] Dan O'Neill and others, *Up the Right Channels*, Brisbane, 1970.

[39] Reed's letter to schools and organizations in May 1966, cited in the *Secondary Teacher*, no. 157, July 1970, p. 5.

[40] Bill Hannan, 'Principles to Practice', ibid., pp. 12–21; Bill Hannan, 'General Studies: What's in the Name?', ibid., pp. 29–31; D. C. White and Eva Wynn, 'An Approach to General Studies', ibid., pp. 31–3.

Alternative policies to that of the governments and officials of education have not so far come mainly from the Left, as usually defined. Outside of the University of Queensland there has been little coherent thought and action on changing structures or other content of university education. Australia lacks the associations of radical sociologists, philosophers, economists and the like found in the United States, for example. Such work as has been done is mainly in the form of scattered articles. One book has been produced in the field of history.[41] There are some signs that this is changing, and more determined efforts are being made to develop alternatives to the present hierarchical nature of universities.

Perhaps the weakness stems from the fact that an important section of the Left has up to now regarded struggle in education as of little importance. Their viewpoint is that educational institutions are part of the capitalist superstructure and, as all marxists know, the decisive changes occur in the base.

> In their present form, they [the universities] must be smashed . . . The struggle of revolutionary students is against capitalism, i.e. against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, and the universities are an essential part of the capitalist, bourgeois state superstructure.[42]

---

[41] Humphrey McQueen, *A New Britannia*, Penguin Books, 1970.

[42] E. F. Hill, 'The Working Class is the Leading Force in the Revolution', *Vanguard*, 8 October 1970.

A statement from a similar political viewpoint goes:

> **Universities provide the training ground for the 'cadres of the bourgeoisie' – the lawyers, engineers, economists, writers: in short, functionaries who keep the system going.[43]**

There is obviously a fair amount of truth in these statements. Because they were much more nearly true twenty or thirty years ago, the authors of the statements are at a loss to explain the student revolutionary movement today, except in very general terms of the effects of the developing crisis of imperialism. The connection between this general explanation and the particular circumstances are scarcely made. In doing so, however, two beliefs of the authors quoted must be queried. One is a question of fact. The universities today train far more than cadres in the old sense; they train workers, and if to this are added the other tertiary level educational institutions and the expanded secondary schools, the picture is of a whole new intellectually-trained proletariat coming into existence. Universities train more secondary school teachers than they do lawyers, for example. The cadre training, if it is to be called this, is of cadres to train workers. Secondary school teachers are workers in a key area of capitalist society; it is key in a somewhat different way from that of coal-miners, it is true. However, the reason for their neglect by the authors quoted earlier is more likely to have other bases than that of a different estimation of the importance of teachers in the social structure – it is that, in the generation of their world outlook, teachers are different from the older sections of the working class. Whereas coal-miners or factory workers are forced by the conditions of their work into co-operative relationships which develop solidarity outlooks when faced with private ownership and control of their work situations, on the face of it this applies less to teachers and for that matter students. But teachers and other intellectually-trained workers derive their consciousness also from certain social relationships which make for a socialist consciousness.

---

[43] *The Australian Revolutionary Student Movement*, Communist (Marxist-Leninist) Publication, Melbourne, 1970, p. 3.

If education – knowledge of a kind different from that needed in earlier production – is important in the workforce, the notion of base-superstructure in the old terms must also be reconsidered. The classic statement which has guided generations of communists is that of Marx in the *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy:*

> In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.[44]

In this interpretation, the educational institutions are part of the superstructure of capitalist society, and must be smashed. To the notion of base and superstructure, taken somewhat out of context, is added the comments Marx made on the Paris Commune. Particularly as they have been emphasized by Lenin, these ideas have been part of the canon of the communist movement, and remain so.

> Marx's idea is that the working class must *break up, smash* the 'ready-made state machinery', and not confine itself merely to laying hold of it. . . . The words, 'to smash the bureaucratic-military machine', briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism regarding the tasks of the proletariat during a revolution in relation to the state.[45]

The contention of this chapter is that the educational system in modern technologically-advanced capitalism is

[44] Marx/Engels, *Selected Works*, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1950, vol. 1, pp. 328–9.

[45] V. I. Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, F.L.P.H., Moscow, 1969, pp. 35–6.

not only part of the capitalist superstructure, but part of the productive mechanism. It is the scene of the production of ideas and culture which in themselves are the source of the production of things. As a capitalist institution it must be transformed, and this transformation is possible because it produces within itself an opposing social structure. Two world views are in conflict in the educational institutions.[46] The initial isolation of the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist groups within education is already passing. It is doing so because the new world-view penetrates various industries as they come to rely more on intellectual techniques, and as graduates of the schools who have already taken part in struggle move into employment; and additionally because, particularly among younger industrial workers, the world-view of students in struggle gives a vision of a new society which is worth fighting for. In that sense, the new sections of the working class, those whose ideas and values have been gained in intellectual production, are a vanguard. The tendency, arising from some long-established Left ideologues, to downgrade the struggle within education and to encourage the belief that only by becoming proletarianized (in the old sense) can a student become a revolutionary, inhibits the socialist movement; but the effects of this tendency are likely to be temporary.

Thought and action, intellectual and material production, are inextricably linked in the modern world. Those who would like to return to an earlier state of detached intellectuality merely produce a justification for irresponsibility, a treason of the intellectuals exceeding that of the past. For such an approach means that the kind of action which is taken, the uses of knowledge and the intellectuals themselves are in the hands of others. The issue before us is not whether intellect and action are combined, but on what terms. Students and teachers in schools and universities throughout Australia, as elsewhere in the world, have produced counter-arguments by counter-actions. This is still largely at the action level alone; new theory is necessary, and this will come from analysis of the social basis for their actions by those who take them. When this is done we shall be in a position to produce new societies as well as new thought and action – intellectual, material and social production will be combined.

---

[46] See Geoff Sharp, 'A Revolutionary Culture', *Arena*, no. 16, 1968.

Source: D. White, 'Education and capitalism', in J. Playford and D. Kirsner (eds), *Australian Capitalism*, Penguin, Ringwood, 1972, pp. 219–47.

2

Create your own compliance: The Karmel prospect

A currently popular educational radicalism and the desires of the Australian government are in a process of convergence. Involvement, participation and self-management, all key features of much radical education, are becoming also charcteristic of official policies, particularly as expressed in the recent Report to the Australian Schools Commission (the Karmel Report). On closer examination it can be seen that the relaxation of older stereotyped patterns is on terms and within a framework which is not made by those who take part except in a local and immediate sense. However, the Karmel Report is no mere propaganda exercise; the changes suggested and favoured are profound. This Report, and some other initiatives of the Commonwealth Government, hint at a state in search of a grass roots movement, or of a social system attempting to surround itself with a community. Certainly it appears that many of the policies advocated by radicals in education — community schools, open education, closer relationships between school and external social environment — will now be officially sponsored. Fundamental to one tendency in radical thought is a belief in group subjectivity, the belief that groups of people gathered together can create their own realities. It is this which allows governments to build popular involvement for their own reasons, for such group participation of itself does not lead to an understanding of the social and cultural process as a whole. While people participate, even control, in their localities, central control remains the firmer for being more obscured. To date the Karmel Report has been best known for its recommendations on financial aid. Such a limitation of discussion is unfortunate, for the Report is a blueprint for social and cultural engineering on a scale not seen in Australia since the days of planned settlements.

The Commission (chaired by Professor Peter Karmel) produced a report which it says is a unanimous one, a surprising statement given the radical character of some of its statements. For example

> Schools can build within themselves a community where both education and people are valued, and where the influences of the market place do not dictate the price placed upon individual talents. Participation in such a caring community which sets out to build social relationships through its method of teaching and learning can, by reducing the alienation of the individual, be a regenerating force in society.[2]

Many radical critics of education have made similar statements, but with some differences. The mention of 'regenerating society' does not usually figure in the statements of radicals. But a more important characteristic of the Karmel Report statement is the deintellectualization of community. There are vast differences between the language of the Martin Report of 1964 (the notorious 'human capital' report) and that of Karmel's committee. The Karmel Report appears to go to considerable lengths to avoid such terms as human capital; efficiency is carefully stated only when the discussion is of the distribution of resources and of organization, and the language preferred is of human talent, relationships, participation and individuality. Yet it is hardly likely that an approach to schooling which says so little of intellectuality would be acceptable if earlier work had not been done to devalue the notion. One of the possible sources of community is that of the community of scholars, and for all the élitism which has come to surround that phrase, a partial truth of the social formation of ideas exists within it. Most of what reality remained in the term as a description of universities was destroyed by the onslaught of central control in the distribution of finance by the Australian Universities Commission. Universities have come to accept the permanence of political institutions and their dependence upon them, and the function of the elaboration of ideas and techniques for the execution of policies made elsewhere. Schools are now to be brought into line, with a kind of three stage model of control developing; state appointed committees outline the general policies, academics do the work of elaborating these into workable and ideologically acceptable schemes, schools do the job. Unlike some previous forms of control, in this scheme everyone has a responsible task, and control over their work. The response of university departments of education to the Karmel Report is an illustration; criticism has been slight, if existent, and drowned by the noise of meetings arranged to gather in a share of the funds for the kinds of research and development wanted. The universities have accepted that

---

[1] *Schools in Australia*, Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, (Chairman, Peter Karmel), May, 1973.

[2] *Ibid.*, paragraph 2.22, p. 14.

they are to be a source of technical expertise in carrying through a policy made by others. Likewise the schools are not to do with developing intellectuality, if by this is meant an independence of position and an understanding not prescribed by limits which are known to others but not to the learner. The universities, by previous government action and their own complicity, have largely become state agencies. The schools are to socialize the young, and more effectively than in the past by cooperating with other agencies already engaged in the process.

> However education in formal institutions, separated from both the home and the world of work, has proved to be an inadequate means of changing patterns of social stratification or of initiating all young people into society. Unless our conception of education broadens to enable school to forge closer links with other solializing agencies, the possibility of providing equal life chances for children from all types of social backgrounds is severely limited.[3]

The use of the notion of equality will be discussed later; the function of the school (and life) as a socializing process, as the use of alienation (in the previous quotation) as a synonym for unsocialized, is typical of the report. While socialization is not towards the present in an absolutely unchanged form, the structures are in basic form those of today, and the changes are to be gradual, and brought about by the initiative of those in positions of authority. Professor Karmel is, as he declares, a Fabian.[4]

The Karmel Report comes out for decentralization and local responsibility. For example

> The Committee favours less rather than more centralized control over the operation of schools. Responsibility should be devolved as far as possible upon the people involved in the actual task of schooling, in consultation with the parents of the pupils whom they teach and, at senior levels, with the students themselves.[5]

There are some qualifications to this policy of decentralization. The money will be distributed from central agencies. The argument for this central distribution is based upon equaltiy of provision, and efficiency in the use of resources, which require that "certain services need to be organized centrally". The Report encourages diversity; no single pattern is necessarily the best.

> Better ways will not necessarily be the same for all children or for all teachers. This is an important reason for bringing responsibility back into the school and for allowing it to be exercised in ways which enable a hundred flowers to bloom rather than to wither.[6]

Consistent with this idea on diversity, the notion of uniformity of standards, academically, is opposed. In rejecting the idea that equality of social groups means that equal percentages of girls, boys, working class, middle class, blacks, whites etc. should gain access to higher education, the Committee reports:

---

[3] *Ibid.*, 2.17, p. 13.
[4] *The Age*, June 19, 1973.
[5] *Schools in Australia*, 2.4, p. 9.
[6] *Ibid.*, 2.10, p. 11.

> The doctrinaire pursuit of equal average outcomes for all social groups could become so expensive as to be unacceptable in terms of alternatives forgone. It could also have undesirable aspects of its own: it admits only one criterion of excellence — an academic one — and assumes that everyone should value the same thing. A further danger is that outcomes might be obtained by retarding the most academically able in order to reduce the range of difference.[7]

There is a strong hint here that the members of the Committee are more knowledgable than they let on. The only danger they point out is that the academically able may be restricted, which suggests that the Committee put more attention on that criterion than they want others to do. The hedging is extremely sensible, for who but the academically able and politically acceptable could write such a Report, to tell others that they should be happy on other dimensions. But naturally such a leadership will want to perpetuate itself; it could scarcely envisage any other way in which the whole could be envisaged or managed. After all, it is still necessary to engage in talent selection. Similarly, there is something other than that which appears in the way 'diversity' is used by the Karmelians. Diversity could, it appears rather is likely, to mean the acceptance of present differences. The argument which tells us that diversity is essentially a good thing is a cover or a justification for the acceptance of the differentials associated with the education of various social groups, when these differences have something to do with one group exploiting another. The appeal of the equality of diversity is used to justify and extend domination, just as alienation means non-socialization. Hundreds of radicals will applaud the statement that

> The school does not exist to grade students for employers or for institutes of higher learning. Nor should it regard higher education as the only avenue to a life of dignity and worth.[8]

The radicals may not be as much in agreement that there need be no change in the present social organization as implied in the statement, except that perhaps the present must be rethought in terms which give all bits of it their own dignity and worth. The changes planned by the Committee are in the meaning of life rather than in any other reality. To do this a socially constructed reality must be made, but if it is not made by changing anything else, it must be manufactured. The process of manufacture of a new conception of life is different from the dissemination of propoganda, even to the extent of an intensive Goebbels-like effort; it is also different from those previous historical efforts which involve the rewriting of history. To construct a different social reality, the relationships between persons must be changed;

---

[7] *Ibid.*, 3.22, p. 25.

[8] *Ibid.*, 3.25, p. 26

what is envisaged in the Report is the manufacture of certain relationships, which change the appearance of reality, though words like appearance and reality already become slippery to the grasp. But the change in appearance is within the manufactured cells of a structure which is itself unchanged.

The diversity and decentralization of control favoured by the Committee are premissed upon an acceptance of the present structures. One way of looking at the Report, and some other recent initiatives of the government, is as the state and the ALP in search of and artificially fostering a grass roots community. Other parts of the world have the reverse, with a moribund or formal community or locality meeting apparatus being revised, either as a result of radical activity or government initiative; even in the case of Sweden where a good deal of state activity exists in the production of a centrally managed participatory society it is said that there are some elements of localized, if paternalist, community from the past which could be used.[9] In Australia these are rare; Scherer[10] has pointed to the exceptional case of Broken Hill, where community activity by trade unions is strong, but within the confines that ownership of the mines is accepted, and, since the mineowners live elsewhere, the union influence and control of everyday life leaves the true controllers untouched. This aside, the arguments for diversity and decentralization of the Karmel Report are predicated and dependent upon the acceptance of present structures, and their transition from potentially oppressive given to self made acceptances. Money allocations will be made, it is recommended, to achieve this.

> Attitudes, which are (equally) accepting, but not necessarily approving of, individuals and social groups irrespective of their life styles or accomplishments, and teachers who believe in the capacity for change in all children, cannot be bought.[11]

But this proviso follows the statement:

> Human and physical resources do not of themselves ensure a high quality education. Many essential ingredients of good schooling, notably attitudinal and organizational ones, cannot be bought with dollars. But the development of curricular more relevant to the requirements of particular children and to the problems and challenges of the real world, of closer school-community relationships and of active parental interest which is a pre-requisite for increasing school effectiveness, can all be facilitated by the financial backing of new approaches to ways and means.[12]

The funds available are generous by Australian standards. Some will be distributed through the present channels, some through new regional bodies. Funds are also available for special projects of an innovatory kind and will come from a Canberra committee.

---

[9] Huntford, Roland, *The New Totalitarians*, Allen Lane, London, 1971.
[10] "Wages: The Management of Labour", *Arena* 31, p. 42-43.
[11] *Ibid.*, 5.5, p. 62.
[12] *Ibid.*, 5.3, p. 61.

77

> Applications for financial support would be invited from individuals and groups, not only of teachers but from the community, so as to provide an opportunity for changes to come from beyond present institutional frameworks.[13]

The overall picture is of diversity within control, a kind of cultural pluralism grafted into the existing structures, with innovations planned or approved centrally. In one hit the Report, if its recommendations on the scale of finance are accepted, wipes out for the time at least the old economic based militancy and incorporates much of the remainder of radical thought. No longer will simple economic demands, or partial cultural reforms, be in opposition to the government policy, nor shake the control over lives that hidden authority exerts. The Karmel committee is a vanguard, one might say, of a new consolidation of authority. To oppose it, groups of people who see the social and cultural process as a whole are necessary. The radical education movement, in the terms which it has taken for the past five or so years is over; reaction in the form of progressiveness is in the ascendance, and counter meanings and actions require a period of working out. The components of radical thought which have provided the opportunity for the new reaction to elaborate a strategy need some examination. But we have not yet finished with Karmel.

One way of seeing the consistency and the change within education over the last century is in the use of 'equality' which has long been said to be a justification and purpose of state intervention in education. The theme runs throughout the history of state education. Sometimes the introduction of compulsory and free education in each of the colonies is still seen as a victory for democratic and liberal thought, as was said at the time of its introduction. "In Australia, by contrast with England", writes Alan Barcan[14] "the lower classes already had or were achieving a major share of economic and political power." A democratic hue became apparent in Australian education, as some of those in power thought it desirable to place a liberal education before the people. The state acted to provide equality of effective education, particularly in rural areas. "The reforming spirit of colonial democracy also applied itself in the 1870s and 1880s to providing greater equality of educational opportunity." [15] An historian of Queensland education has expressed the view that the 1875 Education Act for free, compulsory, and secular education "embodied virtually all the progressive principles of education of the day".[16] The arguments of the time in that state seem to have been similar to those elsewhere, particularly the difficulty of providing education equally over the territory of the state without centralized control, and the inefficiency of the churches in doing so. In W.A. free tuition, the provision of government schools, and compulsory attendance produced the same kind of equality by 1899.[17] Education Mossenson notes, played a role in consolidation in W.A. a little different from that in the other states, in the assimilation of "the children of sandgroper and t'othersider elements",[18] reconciling earlier animosities and hence the breaking down of Western Australia's isolation from the other colonies. This other function of education, that of consolidation, contains the clue which suggests that the liberal talk of equality was alloyed with some other purpose; if not, why compulsion?

---

[13] *Ibid.*, 12.7, p. 152.

[14] "The Australian Tradition in Education" in R. W. T. Cowan, *Education for Australians*, Cheshire, Melbourne, 1964, p. 10.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

[16] Wyeth, E. R., *Education in Queensland*, A.C.E.R., Melbourne, n.d., p. 128.

Liberal and democratic rhetoric accompanied the passage of state education acts throughout Australia, and is echoed in the work of some of the historians of the period. Austin puts more importance upon efficiency. "In every colony", he writes "theoretical and practical considerations combined to convince the legislatures that the State should see to the education of its children, and that the State alone was capable of doing this, for neither the local communities, nor the Churches, nor the existing boards of education appeared to be capable of discharging this national duty." [19] The people may have believed in equal opportunity for all, and liberal thought "recruited the state as the active agent to assist the individual in pursuit of his fair chance to make good".[20] Political leaders had a different objective in mind, that of a unified society, according to Hyams and Bessant. "Social cohesion in a community in which the newcomer predominated was to them a vital aim." [21] Sectarian hostility was a barrier in the quest for a unified colonial society. Denis Grundy, who writes with more concern for the interests of the Catholic minority, argues that centralized state school systems bring about institutionalized powers amounting to coercion.[22] Catholic schools survived, but as a poverty stricken and embattled segment. Other initiatives, particularly of the local groups concerned with the establishment of technical schools, were more effectively supressed or discouraged. State action, accompanied by a labour movement belief in statism and an anticatholic ideology, laid a foundation for popular oppression of the one substantial minority which stood outside a monolithic pro-British nationalism, allowing an outpost of potentially anti-imperialist feeling to be exploited by right-wing ideologues. Its consequences today are the DLP, and, for example, the association with reactionary political groups of a potentially socialist position of the Right to Life movement.

---

[17] Mossenson, David, *State Education in Western Australia 1829-1960*, University of W.A., 1972, p. 95.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[19] Austin, A. G. *Australian Education 1788-1900*, Pitman, Melbourne, 1961, p. 177.

[20] Hyams, B. K. and B. Bessant, *Schools for the People?* Longman, Melbourne, 1972, p. 47.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

[22] *'Secular, Compulsory and Free'*, Melbourne University Press, 1972.

Equality of education from the 1870s until quite recently was an equality of provision for those prepared to accept the hegemony of the state in this field, and a means of suppression of those outside. Equality, in so far as there was any, was available only at the more elementary levels of education, and the churches continued to dominate secondary education. Equality was a rhetoric covering dominance, inequality and, possibly, efficiency. The use of education as a means of establishing national unity is still with us, although the particular ways of attempting this have changed. Likewise equality has been given new content, testifying that the appeal of the notion of equal entry into adult relationships remains.

A century ago, equality, where it was applicable, applied only to the provision of minimal educational services for working class and rural groups. Secondary education remained for long the province of church schools, and therefore of those able to afford fees. State secondary schools appear to have developed importantly first in the countryside where a class mix and scattered population meant that there were fewer opportunities for the children of those who in the cities were able to make use of private schools. State secondary schools expanded in number gradually, but it was not until post world war II that a different definition of equality developed.

Tom Roper's book, *The Myth of Equality*,[23] marks the popular celebration of the new definition, although attention to the inequality had been drawn earlier by groups not at all concerned with democratic feeling, notably the ACER[24] and the Martin Committee.[25] Equality now became a name for a concern that not all had equal access to higher education, and therefore to the desirable jobs. From one side, this meant access to a mirage of social mobility, and from another an end to wastage and inefficient selection of talent. The change in popular thought to a consideration of education as a means of access to well paid and influential positions reduced the stability of class-based attitudes, at first noticeable in the decline of traditional working class politics. But such an instability is dangerous over larger dimensions of society; new limits are now being manufactured, and a Labor Government is merely the harbinger of an attempted new consolidation which will be carried through by future governments irrespective of party.

---

[23] Roper, Tom, *The Myth of Equality*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1971.

[24] Radford, W. C., *School Leavers in Australia*, A.C.E.R., Melbourne, 1962, p. 55.

[25] Report of the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education in Australia to the Australian Universities Commission (Martin Report), 1964.

The dichotomies of classes were unaffected by this provision. The constancy of the class structures did not require intervention of a manipulatory kind of the thought structures of the young, beyond the general acceptance of the notions of the independence of the state as an instrument beyond classes, and the acceptance of a unified society as a desirable state of affairs. The definite uniformity was, as has been shown by Humphrey McQueen[26] and other writers, achieved by specific exclusion of non-whites, particularly the Chinese and Aborigines, and also by the suppression of Catholics. The need for talent selection and the extension of a higher level of general education was associated with an ideological myth, that of social mobility and the absence of class domination. Large scale expectations of mobility are unreal, and from the point of view of social order, dangerous. The Karmel Report plays down the talent selection and upward social mobility aspects of education, without abolishing them. Equality is now seen as equality of diversity, and with a removal of the more obvious signs of financial inequality in this diversity. The attempt to level school provisions has been most noticed in newspaper publicity. The section of the Report which led to the policy of varying the amount of aid to fee paying schools says:

> In respect of recurrent resources, a school is classified as in need of assistance for additional resources per pupil used within it is less than some acceptable standard. A corollary of this definition is that one school is regarded as needing more assistance than another if the quantity of resources per pupil used in the former is small than that used in the latter.[27]

This policy is a revival of the long existing theme that the state will act to ensure equality of access to public resources, and extends to the secondary school what in the 1870s was made the policy for primary schools. The state in the nineteenth century however excluded certain groups from this participation, notably the Catholic Irish. Those who have built their political power and career on this exclusion, notably Santamaria, have opposed this mode of allocation of funds. For the first time, savage and open reaction to Santamaria's policy has come from official Catholic circles, in this case from Father Martin, director of the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne.

> It's absurd to see this whole matter as a cunning ploy on the part of the present Government which will pave the way for the demise of Catholic schools. This is a typical fear ploy which is often used.[28]

The Report however does nothing, as it could do nothing, about inequality, except in the allocation of tax money. The government policy is now to extend equality in one direction, to have no groups excluded from the area of operation of the state, and to introduce the theme of equality of diversity. In doing this, the Report draws on the theory and program advocated by Christopher Jencks and others.[29] The equality comes across not as a right to obtain resources, or access to power, or to socially favoured jobs. Equality is access to enjoyment and participation.

---

[26] McQueen, Humphrey, *A New Britannia*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1970.
[27] *Schools in Australia*, 6.1, p. 70.
[28] *The Age*, August 10, 1973, p. 5.

> Schooling is a significant segment of life which for all children ought to be enjoyable and fruitful in itself, not merely a preparation for life to come.[30]

and

> Some schools might evolve through successful interaction with their communities into new "open" institutions, less alienated from their communities than is now generally the case in disadvantaged areas.[31]

Such a proposition supposes the existence of community as not being a part of a social structure, as a local group which has no links with other groups, or if it has these links that they are of no importance. There is an analogy in the notion of workers control of a factory. Often this means participation, not ownership. But even where it does mean ownership, it is not necessarily the case that anything much changes, for those who now own the factory are still linked with others through the market, and still produce the commodities within a total system which they have had no say in making demands. It is possible of course to develop a program of action including workers control which raises these issues; but that requires a programme in which new meanings of production and exchange, and widely extended relationships between workers in one place and another, are developed. Workers control lacks the wider meaning associated with class, and may introduce parochialism under the guise of liberation. The concentration on ownership does not automatically raise these questions. In the schools the emphasis on community is just as likely to avoid or obscure the questions of why the community exists, its relationship to the wider society, its part in the total social process.

The edifice of community which is elaborated in the Karmel Report is in a way imposed by the ALP governed state. Its popular roots are in the Australian version of the liberal welfare state, which looks after the people in its care. Yet something a good deal more far reaching than the provision of schools, pensions, child endowment and the like is embodied in this report, and in certain other policies of the government. What is being planned is the participation of the people, the development of a culture by the state. That culture is fragmented and groupy, enveloping and localized. It is class as culture, an attempt to develop a two level society with managers and managed, possible because of the continued existence of the framework which has long existed; but that framework still exists, and cannot be overthrown without its accompanying culture. The culture and the society become coterminous, in a manner which has not existed in earlier capitalism, if the plan succeeds. Nor can it be overthrown in the manner of most earlier models of the overthrow of capitalism; for one thing the culture must be understood and changed, not merely the structure. While the roots of the present development lie in the needs of the modern capitalist social structure, and use the tradition of state reliance and liberal-welfare attitudes towards the state, they are also dependent upon the popular counter-culture movements. It is no accident that the Karmel Report contains much of the language of alternative education.

---

[29] Jencks, Christopher, *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America*, Basic Books, New York, 1972.

[30] *Schools in Australia*, 9.8, p. 112.

[31] *Ibid.*, 9.9, p. 112.

The transition of socialist, radical, or critical thought necessary in the working out of educational programmes is large. The arguments around more money for schools have been wiped out, or can only be seen as minor. The Catholic solidarity has been destroyed. Already the arguments of a few months ago regarding talent selection and human capital formation have begun to look a little old-fashioned. There are not many now who will raise with such crudity the view expressed recently by a senior officer of the Australian Council for Educational Research that

> One of the functions (of an education system) is to harness the best resources available in a country to solve the problems being presented to us as we enter the 21st century.[32, 33]

That function remains, but we shall hear it less often expressed, just as we will hear less of the gross national product, economic development and the like, and more of community, participation, ecology; the way in which we are managed changes, in a fashion which at the present time has a basic appeal to many.

The Whitlam government has disoriented many on the left because it has adopted, apparently, many of the policies which the radical left have developed over the past few years, and yet an uneasiness exists that a government is going to do something else with them. In fact the Australian government has more than

---

[32] Rechter, Bernard, "Better-off would gain in ballot for university places", *The Age*, July 10, 1973, p. 17.

[33] Some readers may think that a criticism of an important part of the work of the A.C.E.R. is being insinuated here. We can be reasonably sure however that neither this nor any other part of the article will be taken too seriously by the Director of A.C.E.R., Dr. Radford, as it is in writing that he has declared "I would doubt the truth of anything he (Mr. White) wrote henceforth". The statement was made in a letter written with knowledge of the use to which it would be put, presented to the La Trobe University Tenure Committee when it was discussing a recommendation against my tenure made by the former Dean of the School of Education, Professor Goldman, in 1972. Dr. Radford was upset by an article "Consuming Interest in Education" which appeared in Arena 24, 1971; he has declined to reply to the article in any public fashion, apparently preferring another method handling disagreement.

adopted the policies, it has adopted at least in some areas of its practice a style which suggests a new mode of capitalist operation. That it is able to incorporate many of the ideas of radicals suggests that these were not in reality the working out of the alternate society that they at times have been thought to be. In education, the freer school, the community school, the school programme more related to the outside social environment, the participation of parents, and the independence of the teachers from employing authorities have all been shown to be capable of inclusion in an official state document. The characteristics of such programmes need some examination.

A typical modern school programme tends to stress the relationship between the persons in the school, the interests of the children, and the non-school experience. An older, 'traditional' school stresses the learning of theories and facts derived from long established disciplines. In the traditional school the theories are made to appear to have an objective truth, as if they were not the productions of men engaged in particular social formations and particular forms of interaction with nature. In this sense, school children are tied, unknowingly, into a set of meanings which were not made by them and which make them potentially at the service of others. This education has its own contradictions, however, in that the students are sometimes enabled to enter a wider world than that provided by neighbourhood environments or segments of a particular class. An education of this kind is necessary to a capitalism which in its continual revolution of the means of production extends this to the shaking up of the human factors of production, dragging people from their backgrounds into more flexible and skilled usages. The opposition to traditional education has taken at least two directions, one an attempt to make more conscious the nature of the manner in which ideas are formed, and of the relationship between those and other social processes; the other to resist the domination of established theories by emphasizing personal experience. The emphasis on personal experience leaves untouched the meanings which are used to interpret and generate that experience. A group of children may not in a progressive school be dominated by the structure and established theories of the institution and the teacher; they will be dominated by an experience and habits of thought coming unexamined from the past and the agencies of the media.

In a more extreme form progressive education of this kind produces and is based upon a group solipsism. Previously solipsism has been thought of as asserting the primacy of individual subjectivity as a criterion of reality. The new solipsism however, emphasizes the world of the small group: the individual subjectivity is seen as circumscribed by a reality of limited range; because there is no principle accounting for the interconnection of this multitude of micro worlds they can appear as self made.

The solipsism of the small group then can have it both ways: by drawing upon the experience of self-determined expression characteristic of the primary group it co-ordinates 'individualism' and the old solipsism. By emphasizing the predominance of the small group it sets the real 'objective' frame within which free individuals make their small worlds. Effectively two traditions are reconciled, but the essence of solipsism is retained as a philosophical rationalization of a *status quo*.

A world is constructed which is as good as any other world, and has no measure of reality outside its own construction. The production of group-made worlds of this kind is an ideology which suits a class society in which the fundamental structure is obscured, and the existence of solidaristic relationships spread throughout the nation such as those of the working class have been broken. Such an ideology, largely drawn from that of the recent version of the counter-culture, is appropriate to a manipulated society which is perceived as a self-managed one.

The arguments against such solipsism — of which the chief theoretician is Berger[34] and which comes into education theoretically through such writers as Glasser[35] — are of several varieties. Lenin's arguments with the solipsism widespread among intellectuals in Russia after the defeat of the 1905 revolution and the decline of the working class movement were based on the objective reality of natural phenomena.[36] The rise of solipsism there coincided with the decline of a widespread action-based association between people engaged in a reconstruction of the world, and such movements are themselves an argument against solipsism, for they pose the existence of individual or small-group constructions of the world against a more widely based one. Another kind of argument is that there are bio-cultural bases for the association between persons which prevent any form of association being possible, an argument which is the subject of attack from women's liberation, gay liberation, and *Tribune*. A further form of criticism of the present solipsism is to be found in the examination of the historically and socially derived meanings and institutions which in fact govern our present experience, and which must be overthrown if our lives are to be changed. This is merely to say that the solipsist view is untrue, and those who act by it in the hope that they form their own lives within the niches of the unexamined present are in truth governed by the present. Obviously a fuller treatment of the social and philosophical foundations of that apparent radicalism which assists domination is necessary.

---

[34] Berger, P., *The Sacred Canopy*, Doubleday, New York, 1967. Berger, P. and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Allen Lane, London, 1967.
[35] Glasser, William. *Schools Without Failure*, Harper and Row, New York, 1969.
[36] Lenin, V. I., *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1952.

What is to be done in the present circumstances? Any change of a worthwhile, revolutionary nature requires the elaboration of alternate ways of looking at society and human activity, a movement which in the daily actions of its members potentially and increasingly consciously lives by the alternative and opposing meanings, and some kind of conflict, confusion or division of those in power. There is nothing new in that statement; the recurring argument is about the nature of those who work out the alternative meanings and their relationship with those who are potentially the members of the movement. At times the movement in its actions restates the categories by which people live; the danger of a division of labour between those who act and those who formulate is that the 'vanguard' becomes an incipient new class. Yet a movement which is confined, as the radical education movement is increasingly becoming, to working within conceptions acceptable and favourable to state manipulation achieves nothing. The kind of programme which is proposed by the Karmel Committee opens up, even asks for, action and involvement. If thought is given to the limits imposed upon this action, and more far reaching attempts planned, the Whitlam government's plans may be merely a part of a process towards further change. But to do that more thoroughgoing criticism and elaboration of alternatives than progressive education nowadays has within it are needed.

Source: D. White, 'Create your own compliance: The Karmel prospect', *Arena*, nos. 32–33 (double issue), 1973, pp. 35–48.

3

After the divided curriculum

Students should be able to both reflect and act.

WE HAVE NOT always been conscious of a politics of curriculum. It is a fairly recent development to consider the curriculum as anything other than a given and only slightly-to-be-varied thing, without any politics in it. In the 'fifties and early 'sixties curriculum, if considered at all, was mostly seen as the sum total of the prescribed syllabuses. In Victorian state schools, and no doubt elsewhere, two curriculum styles in secondary schools existed — that of the technical schools associated with material production, and that of the high schools associated with the various forms of mental labour from the professional to the clerical. Some curriculum argument occurred, and some on the left advocated a comprehensive school and were concerned about the various forms of streaming that existed. But these discussions did not lead into a comprehensive argument of the politics of the curriculum.

Union politics at the time tended to accentuate divisions in the interests of achieving unity. The unity of teachers maintained by looking after the special interest of groups of teachers tended to prolong the differential treatment of school students. In practice what was being done to the students, the consideration of what form of life the children were being inducted into, took second place to looking after the interests of teachers. I suppose that is always a problem for teachers' unions, and for other organisations of similar workers. We can see it happening with doctors, for example.

The divided curriculum, between the preparation for material productive labour and that for mental labour, was held together by things outside the school. The continuities in the nature of the trades, the professions and the public service went along with a continuity of their relationships between one another. The schools did their additional bit for the unification. Beliefs in science, commodity production, progress, and earlier on the Empire and its democratic and white Australian outposts were widely held and the schools assisted in the reproductions of these beliefs.

In the late 'sixties and early 'seventies, beliefs in science, and in progress based upon the cognitive and rational manipulation of nature and society, replaced the imperialist and nationalistic curriculum with what might be called the multi-national curriculum. The multi-national curriculum is the curriculum of disembodied universals, of the mind as an information-processing machine, of concepts and skills without moral and social judgment but with enormous manipulative power, an education in which culture (in the sense of the lives and meanings of the people) has no place. That curriculum proposed the elevation of abstract skills over particular content, of universal cognitive principles over the actual conditions of life. In its most degenerate forms it had proposed the content-free curriculum, the content-free test, and that successor to the IQ, the all-purpose measurer of twelve years of schooling through a single number which provides differential access to the most favoured areas of tertiary education.

In Victoria, the politics of curriculum came to the fore among teachers in campaigns for independence from bureaucratic control. 'Professionalism', it was called. The term has elitist connotations. The professional makes decisions which should not be the subject of bureaucratic control or interference, and which are in the best interests of the client, whether or not he or she realises it. From the radical side of this campaign developed the definition of curriculum which has existed for some time now, at least in Victoria, and has become a kind of orthodoxy. The definition goes something like:

Curriculum is taken to mean the sum of all the experiences planned and unplanned provided by the school for its students. It includes not only what is taught, but also the way the school is organised and the methods of teaching employed.

Lately, this definition of curriculum is showing signs of inadequacy. The definition does not say anything about the direction of the curriculum, nor give any clues as to why some curricula or elements of a curriculum are to be preferred to others. Nor does it say anything about the rights of parents, or of other adults in the community who may be concerned about the manner in which young people are brought up, i.e. about the future of society.

A WAY OF FORMULATING the curriculum now is to think of the relationship of the curriculum to forms of social life. A school program is a thing in itself but is also the basis for the establishment or re-establishment of a form of social life. A curriculum gains its value direction from the relationship it bears to a desirable and valuable form of social life. Since it isn't very clear what the future form of social life in Australia is to be — what we've got now seems to be somewhat unstable and in some respects undesirable — there are great difficulties in establishing a suitable curriculum. Reproducing the present society in any simple form doesn't seem to be a highly desirable goal, yet any curriculum must also be realistic.

Since we can scarcely afford to be dogmatic about the future, and we can't be dogmatic on such an insecure basis, the curriculum ought to be one which lays the basis for increasing the ability of as many students as possible to become active, participating adults. By active participation I mean that students learn some real skills and knowledge which allow them to take part in adding to the general social good — both materially and spiritually — and also gain the basis for making judgments of about undesirable social directions.

In a sense this is an argument for a quite orthodox curriculum. The bases for judgment are likely to be found or derived, as always, in the study of literature and history, and the bases for contributing materially are in the study of science and the practical subjects. The differences with the orthodox curriculum are important too. The students should be active, able to take part in the curriculum as well as learn from it, in a manner appropriate to their ages; they should learn the crafts of writing and making, as well as study what others have written and made; and they should be able to both reflect and act. Traditionally, the curriculum has divided these responsibilities and capacities. Some do the thinking, others the practising.

There are other fundamental differences with the orthodox curriculum. The curriculum, in recognising that an adult life takes account of both the reflective and the practical capacities, needs also to take account of the group and the general. People live in groups, and the groups live in association with one another. Schools should recognise that people are Catholic, Lebanese, Greek, Anglo-Celtic, Australian, Vietnamese or Aboriginal; they should also recognise that the members of these groups are in contact with one another. A common curriculum is not necessarily in contradiction with the recognition of particular group qualities, although it may be.

Finally, a school system which works towards the fundamental quality of preparing students to be active, participatory adults can scarcely also work towards excluding and limiting some of its members; that is such schools cannot take on forms of assessment, streaming, or subject groupings which work on the assumptions that some must fail, be streamed out, or taught baby-minding crap.

My chief point is that curriculum represents an introduction and preparation for a form of social life. Curriculum in the past whatever the rhetoric, has largely been a process of reproducing an existing social form, with all its divisions. The people who have described the process of reproduction — most recently, and for Australia, in that useful book *Making the Difference* — have made this clear to us. Teachers are engaged in a practice, not just a socially-critical exercise, and the politics of curriculum now require that we go beyond reproduction, to give conscious attention to the production of social life. Schools can't, of course, produce new forms of social life, but they can educate in such a way that those who are taught in them have as a result of their education increased knowledge and opportunity to do so.

Source: D. White, 'After the divided curriculum,' *The Victorian Teacher*, vol. 2, no. 1, March 1983, pp. 6–7.

4

Participating in nothing: New moves in education

> Government and Church should . . . be equally excluded from any influence in the school . . . the state has need, on the contrary, of a very stern education by the people.
>
> (K. Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*.)

Many of the Australian states are now giving fresh consideration to the function and organization of the final years of the secondary school. Several years ago Matriculation Colleges were established in Tasmania; more recently, senior schools covering the last two years of schooling — years eleven and twelve — were set up in the ACT. Victoria may follow this trend, if the conclusions of the Discussion Paper,[1] recently prepared by a review committee set up by the Minister of Education and chaired by Jean Blackburn, are accepted. The Discussion Paper is commonly known as the Blackburn Report. The use of the terms 'discussion paper' and 'report' almost interchangeably indicates a general awareness of the nature of its proposals, for in the document educational and political/administrative proposals are interwoven. Effectively, the Discussion Paper indicates the emergence of a 'third stage' in a period of government handling of education which began twenty years ago. The Martin Report of the Federal Government twenty years ago set about increasing the proportion of intellectually trained men and women in the nation; to do so it relied upon and utilized the scientific and sociological knowledge of the academics. The Karmel Report of

Whitlam's time extended this to schooling in general, and attempted to make education and social schooling a more popularly involving process. In the Discussion Paper, the Victorian review committee faces the problem of developing a participatory approach to schooling when the ends to which public schooling are directed are not primarily an intellectually-derived technological advance, as they were in the Martin Report era, but the new problems which arise when large numbers face the prospect of exclusion from the workforce. Deeply held views about equality, anti-streaming, and anti-élitism provide the cultural basis for a set of proposals which, despite the honorable intentions of the writers, will justify and promote just what they are opposed to: that is, the new separation of those who are educated to take their place in the social economy, and those who will be excluded from such a place and maintained in a sector of social redundancy.

Hence, consistently, the paper advocates a highly general equality of participation in education. In this sense it is in accord with generalized notions of equality of men and women, and of the kind of equality proposed by ecumenical multi-culturalists. This political-cultural notion is carried into schooling by the idea of a general education for all through the whole twelve years of schooling (the final two years in separate institutions). This kind of schooling is apparently believed to be good in itself, rather than a preparation for anything in particular. An old idea of the intrinsic goodness of education, a view long held by conservative liberals, is taken up and applied as if it justifies a schooling which can offer many young people no place in a purposeful social life. Overall, the Discussion Paper draws upon popular and radical impulses for equality and the reduction of the social divisions within education, and delivers them as the foundation for an even greater social division.

A major change in the politics of education is at work when educational and administrative issues are brought together in the manner of the Discussion Paper. The questions relating to the content of education are arrived at by addressing a political-economic question: what is to be done with the large number of students attending the final years of schooling when the old assumptions that they were about preparing people for a place in productive and social life no longer apply? The conclusions of the Discussion Paper are partly administrative — as is appropri-

---

1. Ministerial Review of Post-compulsory Education, (Chaired by Jean Blackburn), *Discussion Paper*, Melbourne, VGPS, 1984.

ate to a Report — and partly educational, in that a modified form of liberal education is favoured. No discussion is conducted about the appropriateness of a liberal education — that is, an education concerned with the general cultural formation of people rather than with specialized training — for our circumstances. There is a ring of the 1960s about this, as if people lived by cultural generalities alone, and needed no particular social roles, functions or places. As a consequence, educational discussion and practice is delivered into the hands of the general social managers — now politicians — rather than responsibility for various aspects of education being held by a variety of particular institutions and traditions. Almost certainly, this is not a process favoured by Jean Blackburn and other members of the committee — the criticism here is not of the intentions of the authors, rather it is of an inadequacy of the conceptions they hold in dealing with a very difficult social and educational situation. Politicians, however, directly control only the state system of schools, and another consequence of the Discussion Paper is likely to be the intensification of the division between the private and public schools — that is, the further development and consolidation of class divisions in schooling. Again, it is unlikely that this is what is intended by the authors. Overall, the Discussion Paper is tinged by unexamined beliefs in social accord: administratively it proposes the bringing together of the now-divided forms of schooling held within high schools and colleges of technical and further education; educationally, it attempts to solve the distinction between schooling as a good in itself and schooling as the basis for selective entry into further education and work, and it also says something about removing the distinction between academic and practical knowledge. This desire for social accord is furthered by a belief in the value of participation. Yet all this attempt at accord is within a largely ignored context of the division between private and public schooling, and between the employed and the unemployed.

Education systems once carried within them a clear distinction between the administrative and political wings of the State. The distinction, once held to be fundamental to liberal theory of social organization, is parallel to that between the legal and the political systems, the making of the laws and their enforcement, and so on. A somewhat similar distinction existed in education between the development of knowledge and the creation of educated persons on the one hand, and the employment and use made of knowledge on the other. One strand in left thought, from Lenin in his writings on the State, to Bowles and Gintis in their work on schooling and capitalism, has been concerned to show that this division is largely fraudulent. Other marxists, such as Karl Marx (as in the quotation at the head of this article), Gramsci, and Althusser have insisted on the distinction, although usually in quite different ways to that of the liberal tradition.

In any case, the convergence of the political and the administrative is well on the way in education. A recently published diagram of the hierarchy in the Victorian Education Department places the Minister of Education, Mr. Fordham, at the top, with the Director-General immediately beneath. Policy, administration and curriculum are directly integrated. This tendency to put politics in command of education has forerunners which go back several years. The Martin Report of 1964 — the notorious 'human capital' report — attempted to put the universities at the service of economic and political policies. The Karmel Report in the first year of the Whitlam government did something similar to the schools. That is, the attempt was made to use the schools to overcome social disadvantage and increase the degree of participation in schooling.[2] The last Liberal Party government in Victoria carried this tendency into a more direct control, when the government removed from office the powerful Director General, Dr Laurie Shears, and the two ministers, Hunt and Lacey, produced a paper on the curriculum and organization of schooling. The fact that Hunt and Lacey could think of nothing much to say on curriculum, except a few banalities on literacy and numeracy, does not affect their intention to make the content of schooling, as well as the allocation of resources and such matters, the province of the party in power. The ALP has done rather more through the generation of a number of policy ideas — participation, anti-discrimination, and the like — which link together curriculum politics and State control. In the context of this top-down politicization of schooling, the Discussion Paper reviewed here becomes a means of converting educational content into political policy — a guide to a policy on the curriculum to be followed by the government, as well as a Report on the distribution of resources and the organization of schools.

The issue which the authors of the Discussion Paper present as one to be solved appears as quite straightforward. More people are staying on at school for the eleventh and twelth year. Those years of schooling were established long ago as the first part of academic study which continued into tertiary institutions, providing both the foundation for further study and the machinery of selection of entrants into its institutions. Another stream developed, originally in senior technical colleges and now in Colleges of Technical and Further Education, which set people on the path to becoming skilled tradespersons and technicians. The authors argue that these are now inappropriate for the schooling of large numbers of people who will not continue on these paths, and, they think, the curriculum is undesirably narrow. Their favoured solution is the extension of general education until year twelve, that is, to make this the normal schooling, and (with some reservations) to leave the specialization until later. Organizationally, they favour a break at the end of the tenth year. The two final years should be conducted in colleges which separate the students from the seven year primary and the four year secondary school.

---

[2] See D. White, 'Create Your Own Compliance: the Karmel Prospect', *Arena* 32-33, 1973.

A major part of the argument is demographic. Of the full time students aged between fifteen and nineteen in year twelve:

37.8 per cent are in state high schools
0.8 per cent are in state technical schools
18.5 per cent are in catholic secondary schools
15.7 per cent are in other non-government schools

Altogether 72.8 per cent are in conventional secondary schools. The remaining 27.1 per cent are in colleges of Technical and Further Education. More than half of these (15.8 per cent) are enrolled in tertiary orientation programmes which are intended to provide a parallel course to the Higher School Certificate (HSC) and lead to tertiary entrance. Eleven per cent are enrolled in certificate courses (business studies, child care, other certificate courses for technicians of various kinds), and 0.3 per cent are taking HSC. Overall the number of students staying at school has increased in recent years. Of the students who entered the first year of secondary school (year seven) in 1977, about 70 per cent were still enrolled in year eleven; and 34 per cent continued to year twelve. Only 16 per cent had gone from school directly to tertiary education. When the TAFE figures are added to the school figures, the proportion of the 1977 intake still in full-time schooling in the twelfth year in 1982 is 57 per cent.

A reconstruction of the educational situation has been under way for some time. The educational change expresses a reconstruction of social interests, and the students have taken different paths in recent years. Taking part-time enrolments also into account, 59 per cent of the year twelve population attends schools, and 41 per cent is enrolled in TAFE courses. The reasons for this shift are not discussed. TAFE colleges are a relatively recent development, and perhaps their existence has created a demand, or met a demand which could not previously be fulfilled. They are more adult environments. The methods of of assessment used might be preferred by students. Leaving aside TOP, the shift in enrolment may indicate an increase in the number of jobs which require certificate training. TAFE colleges have also provided a home for the part work society in prevocational and 'leisure' education.

However, looking at the data in another way we might come to conclusions, worthy of further investigation, which are quite different from those of the Ministerial Review. The rate of participation in the last years of secondary education has increased. But it has not just increased in general, it has increased in four specific ways — in private schools, in high schools, in TOP, and in certificate courses related to employment categories. The authors of the Discussion Paper while recording all these areas of increase in enrolment ignore them analytically, and focus only on the general rate of participation. (This is not an unusual mode of analysis: participation in the work-force is usually treated in this way, lumping together employment in productive labour, employment in service, and employment in socially manufactured job-creation schemes.) A more particular anaysis would note that:

(a) Participation in schooling has expanded in years eleven and twelve because a large number of vocational courses have become available.

(b) Participation in schooling has expanded because an alternative to the graded and competitive HSC examination has been developed in TAFE colleges in the form of TOP.

(c) Participation in the normal HSC has increased differentially, with the private schools taking the larger part of the increase.

No evidence is given in the Discussion Paper as to why people choose particular schools. Of course, these forms of schooling cannot go on being expanded indefinitely. It is not sensible to expand certificate courses much beyond what the job market will accommodate. Nor is TOP an alternative except in style of examination. It stands or falls by its value as an alternative pathway to entry into tertiary institutions. The Discussion Paper has an implicit point in its argument that these educational differentiations, brief as their history is, are already becoming outmoded. It does not, however, examine this history at all.

The statistics put together in the Discussion Paper are encouraging to those who prefer a public education over the private. They show that 65.7 per cent of full-time students at year twelve were enrolled in government schools in 1982, if TAFE colleges are included. If TAFE colleges are left out of calculation, and only high schools and their private equivalents are considered only 53.6 per cent of students are in government schools. In fact, there are more people taking TOP in colleges of technical and further education than there are students in year twelve of the non-catholic private schools. Considering only the school-type year twelve, HSC and TOP, government schools enrolled 61 per cent, private 39 per cent. The private schools are not as significant, demographically, as is sometimes thought. (Figures published by Richard Teese[3] show that the highest point of government school enrolments in year twelve was in 1970, reaching 60.8 per cent. Since then the private school proportion has only risen at the expense of government schools, if enrolments in TAFE colleges are not taken into account.) The social significance of private schools is not to be judged on their enrolments, of course. An analysis of education which does not examine the particular qualities of private schools is not an adequate basis for discussion. Some have argued, as Teese does, that 'the function of private schools is to concentrate students from middle-class families together, both to control the range of their social intercourse (through a suitably filtered environment) and to direct the formation of their attitudes, tastes and interests through the academic curriculum'. This needs more investigation, as it seems that private schools may now do this by consolidating a relatively new middle stratum, appearing to offer the relative social mobility which was once the function of high schools; and it may be that the vestigial authority remaining from their religious past, combined with the possibility of entering the higher grades of employment, allows them to function better as schools. The point is that the issues in schooling at the year eleven and twelve levels could be illuminated by detailed comparative study of the paths now taken by students.

Overall, participation in education has expanded a good deal in recent years. The participation rate is higher than previously thought, and this is largely due to the formation of the TAFE colleges. The Discussion Paper favours an even greater participation, but not in the forms in which it is now happening. The authors believe that too many students do not get much out of an education which is primarily geared to further education. (This does not apply to TAFE college certificate courses from which most students do get jobs, but this is not taken into account in the paper.) The authors of the Discussion Paper do not ask, however, just when and under what circumstances the structures and curriculum became unsatisfactory. Retention has increased, by and large, for very many years. The structures were not regarded as inadequate (although they may always have been undesirable) when an expansion in the number of tertiary education places and graduates was also occurring. The structures are now inadequate, not because of the number of students staying on at school, but because there is nowhere for them to go afterwards. In the Discussion Paper this is referred to as unemployment. However, it is probably the case that schools gain part of their authority, at the upper levels, when they provide the basis and opportunity for students to find a place in social life. People do not enter a society through generalities, they do so through particularities. An argument for a general education in conditions of widespread unemployment makes schools a reservation for the unemployed. The authors say 'young people should be encouraged and supported to remain in education because many will find no place in the workforce'.[4] This is said to be an obvious fact. The Discussion Paper appears to be motivated by a desire to have this scarce resource — job opportunity which comes from schooling — more equitably distributed. Equally, unemployment will be distributed. The participatory notion then makes the schools social agencies for cooling down expectations. In any case, while the private schools are excluded from planning, an equitability of distribution of social opportunity is unlikely to be achieved.

---

[3] Richard Teese, 'The Social Function of Private Schools', *Melbourne Working Papers*, 1981, p. 120.

The Discussion Paper, if the argument put forward here is correct, is a proposal for an amelioration of the consequences of restricted job and further educational opportunity. That task is altogether too large for the schools. Students, their parents and their teachers, however filled they may be with the idea of equality in general, deal in actuality with particular circumstances and cases. The Discussion Paper, in the end, has it both ways. One can agree wholeheartedly with the view that the competitive selection processes required of schooling damage both the curriculum and the students' life chances. But it does not necessarily follow, as the authors of the paper believe, that the whole of the twelve years of schooling should become general education. 'Job-specific preparation should occur' they say 'at some point nearer to eighteen years of age than to fifteen'.[5] Since they also believe that a general education should not exclude any part of the population, and since it should not separate theory from practice, the division between the technical and the academic school should not be maintained. The desirable curriculum will have these characteristics, according to the Discussion Paper: mathematics, science/technology, humanities and the arts, and the study of society should be pursued in some form by all; there should be common elements in each of these areas; all alternatives within major areas should have purposes with which students can identify; all should be challenging and pursued with rigour.[6] Additionally, the style of work should allow the development of 'mutuality and cooperation', to be achieved by the development of student responsibility in the running of the school. The examination of the students' learning should be such as to indicate a level of general competence and knowledge. Nevertheless the Discussion Paper recognizes that some form of tertiary selection is likely to continue to be required. The proposed solution is the inclusion in the curriculum, beyond the common programme, of various specialisms which could be especially accredited for tertiary selection. In practice, while selection exists, these specialisms are likely to become of major significance in the curriculum.

---

[4] Discussion Paper, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

The organizational proposal follows these curriculum considerations. An institution which offers this range of subjects would need to be well equipped and staffed, combining featues of TAFE colleges and high schools. They would need to be fairly large. The maturity of the students, and a more adult orientation towards them, suggests their separation from the lower levels of schooling. Mature age people, returning to study, should be easily accommodated. Comprehensive upper secondary colleges would meet these requirements.

Two lines of criticism can be taken in considering the positive proposals of the Discussion Paper. The first of these is whether or not the goal of a more just distribution of educational goods is likely to be achieved; the second is whether the education proposed is a good one as a preparation for the citizenry as a whole. On the first, it is unlikely that the goal will be achieved. If the new colleges are established, it is almost certain that some will be ranked above others, and become the centres of entry into the most favoured areas of tertiary education and employment. More seriously, the single system of schooling will produce a single measure of the students; those who now leave the ordinary secondary schools and find some advantage in TOP courses and certificate courses in TAFE colleges will find themselves being compared in general. It seems likely that some working-class students who use the TAFE system as a way into a job will be excluded by being included in the general measure. Participation, in general, has no class qualities; schooling, as at present constituted, does, and not all of these work against working-class people. An overall common curriculum is likely to lead to a measure of educational equality on a single dimension. The Discussion Paper is naive on class questions in education; but this naivety is part of its analytic disregard of all specific questions. Its categories are formed by a fusion of a belief in general education and the belief that the schools can solve or alleviate the problem of the social redundancy of many young people. In following this path the authors seek to abolish the particular methods through which some young people find their way into a social place — except the private schools.

---

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

On the second issue — the notion of a general liberal education as a preparation for all citizens — the writers of the Discussion Paper have given no apparent indication that they have considered the circumstances within which such an education can work. A general liberal education has, perhaps, been successful here and there where it provides a gloss, sometimes even a source of reflection, for students from social classes with a clear confident notion of their actual place in the world, as for example at Harvard University or some US colleges in the wealthier parts of that country. Whether it will be taken seriously — whether it can have an authority which will allow its successful teaching — in the circumstances we have in Australia now is another question. No form or content of schooling is successful unless it has both cultural and social authority. The running down of the value of HSC courses, given that its selective character has steadily less meaning, is indicative of a crisis of the socal authority of these courses. The limited social opportunity has been redistributed in recent years — on the one side to the private schools, and on the other to the certificate courses in TAFE colleges. General education is probably more appropriate up to year ten, when expectations of a particular place in society are more subordinate to a general expectation of becoming an adult citizen. No wish can change the social reality which hangs over a large number of students in the upper years of the secondary school. The new quality which the Discussion Paper adds to general education — the valuing of the material and technical as well as the understanding of the relationship of technological change to social change — are desirable ones. But, as argued earlier, these go with changes which will emphasize the intellectual over the practical in that the schools of practice — the TAFE colleges — will be reduced in their significance. In any case all we are offered is words and it will take some years before subjects can be developed along these lines; and it is not at all clear what foundations for their development there are. A more practical proposition is to add new subjects to the compulsory core of subjects — now only English is compulsory — taught along with a range of specialized subjects in the final years of schooling. The addition of core subjects could be made within the present HSC and TAFE courses. General liberal education has always had an aroma of leisured conspicuous consumption hanging around it. It develops a new smell when it is provided for the new 'leisured' group, the unemployed.

The problem to which the Discussion Paper is addressed is inadequately formulated. The problem is seen as a numbers problem. Larger numbers of students at the higher levels of school, with nowhere to go, is presented as a problem to be solved by setting up a social reserve for adolescents. Society and schools are seen as a kind of abstraction in which people participate, not as the milieu in which people do real work, prepare for real jobs, come from particular circumstances and have actual relations with other people.

The Discussion Paper proposes a new school, the college which takes the place of years eleven and twelve of the present secondary school. As a corollary it also, without saying so, advocates the establishment of another new school, the four year secondary school. It proposes the abolition of a large part of another school, the TAFE college. The four year secondary school, where a general education is appropriate, will be weakened by comparison with the present high school, and so will general education. The transfer of some TAFE schooling to the new structures will lessen opportunities for working-class young people. Hence, on the authors own preferred positions of equity and general education, the proposals made are contradictory. The Discussion Paper advocates increased participation in education, but says nothing about the difficulty of participation in social life (except to accept the fact). The distinction between education and training, and the superiority of the former, long held by educational liberals, is accepted and given greater emphasis as part of the acceptance of unemployment. Yet training of some kind is what people go to school for, and it is this which gives schools their point. The weaknesses of the Discussion Paper lie in its political assumptions; the authors have attempted to solve a problem of governments, not of the people. Nowhere have they analysed and proposed action about the real conditions of peoples' existence and education. The political approach of the Discussion Paper has the added danger of setting up the conditions for demagogy; for in suggesting that politicians can solve social problems — and then doing nothing about them — they open the way for those who will make the offer. Our recent bout of racist-populist demagogy ought to be a warning. Our situation is too serious to contemplate for long proposals of the kind made here — proposals which would regularize the absence of real participation in social and productive life while advocating an attenuated form of participation through schooling.

Source: D. White, 'Participating in nothing: New moves in education', *Arena*, no. 68, 1984, pp. 79–90.

5

Education: Controlling the participants

> Victoria should set itself a target of achieving, by 1995, 70 per cent participation to the end of Year 12 of schooling.
>
> Within the public sector the Education Department [should] be responsible for all schooling at Years 11 and 12.
>
> A new statutory body should be created to take over all responsibility for curriculum and credentialling at the post-compulsory level.
>
> From the *Report* of the Ministerial Review of Post-compulsory Schooling (the *Blackburn Report*), Melbourne, 1985.

The long period, beginning in 1968, of turmoil, argument and a variety of initiatives in education is to be brought within a new rationalization. Central control of schooling is to be reasserted. This new control is the work of ALP governments, and is the culmination of radical initiatives over many years — even though radicals in education now find themselves once again in opposition. At first view, it appears that the projects favoured by radicals — participation and equity, freedom of information, multicultural education, anti-discrimination — have been put to an end with the acceptance of the *Blackburn Report*. Closer examination shows reassertion of control is actually built upon these ideological practices. The *Karmel Report* of 1973 — much favoured by teacher unions — is in most respects consistent with the *Blackburn Report* of 1985 — much opposed by teacher unions.

---

* This article began as a talk presented in a series of discussions sponsored by *Arena* in late 1984. Other articles from these discussions which have already appeared in *Arena* are those by Gerry Gill 'Post-Structuralism as Ideology', *Arena* 69 and Geoff Sharp 'Constitutive Abstraction and Social Practice', *Arena* 70. In its development the article owes much to comments from Gerry Gill, John Hinkson, Eileen Sedunary, Geoff Sharp, Eva White and Lyn Yates.

The themes of the *Blackburn Report* are comprehensive. Schooling, rather than work, will occupy people until they are seventeen or eighteen years old. The state, through its departments and statutory authorities, is to determine the content as well as the provision of schooling, formally wiping out the control over schooling exercised by the universities and such bodies as the Industrial Training Commission. The influence of teachers upon the content and credentials offered at the upper end of schooling is to be reduced, perhaps eliminated altogether. Over all, the variety and diversity of the past few years is to become ordered and to be made coherent. Initiative from now on is to be the prerogative of official bodies. Management and control via the active participation of teachers is to be replaced by central planning.

I Labor's Renovation

Readers with a long memory, or with a knowledge of the activities of previous Labor governments, might sense an instance of history repeating itself. Shades of post-war reconstruction, of the planning of social life and the abolition of outmoded forms, hang around the corridors of ministerial power. The common characteristics of these two periods might be set out a little more fully: first comes the rapid rise of feeling against outmoded forms of authority; second, the ALP-led renovation of authority; and finally, the return to normal management by the conservatives along the new lines. Thus, the many worthwhile curriculum ideas contained in the *Blackburn Report* cannot be divorced from the form of management that report represents. Future ministers will inherit the form of control, not its particular contents. This repetition of previous patterns is not obvious, partly because it takes a long memory to recall the last period of stable ALP government, but also because the repeated performances are the same only in general form. Each renovation is different. In the period of post-World War II reconstruction, the Federal ALP Government set about achieving some control of the economy in its attempt to eliminate unemployment and alleviate poverty. Once certain institutional forms were established and Keynesian economic management techniques could be applied, Menzies came to power and presided over the pouring out of the commodity cornucopia. Now, when the horn of plenty is apparently empty and the old economic orthodoxies no longer work, the ALP with the temporary support of the majority of the people is 'called upon' to establish a new order.

The Australian Labor Party tends to be more successful than conservative parties in those periods when capitalist rule requires renovation: when the particular interests of the factions which make up the conservative parties can no longer act in the interests of their class and, in appearance, society. (In England, where people are more inclined to look to their betters for salvation, a conservative outsider like Churchill or Thatcher can, by combining appeals to the people with a dose of bullying, act for their class beyond their party.) The ALP in government can bring together in its support the working-class voters and the advocates of radical innovations. In 'normal times' of conservative rule it is easier for radicals and working-class people to distinguish their interests from those of the state and the ruling class. Labor, on the other hand, carries with it an ideology in which the state and the people become one. Radical reformers, anxious to influence the working of the society as a whole, provide the link between state and people, and promote the ideology of their fusion. Labor governments, of course, often make real ameliorative changes: they are in a position to wipe out injustices arising from now obsolete practices, just as they establish practices which make for new injustices.

II Schooling and Renovation

In the current renovation, schooling is rather more significant than during earlier renovations. The kind of schooling in which success once seemed to depend upon work and which acted to allocate jobs to people, is today failing many; and yet schooling seems to be the only way in which a reasonable opportunity in society can be gained. Over the years the various levels of qualifications have been dropped: the Merit (the grade eight certificate) long ago; the Proficiency, Intermediate, Leaving, all several years ago. The Matriculation certificate was replaced by a hybrid offering, backed up by numerous statistical manipulations of marks gained which have acted to degrade the value of achievement in meeting the needs of entrance to tertiary education and employment. A similar process of degradation of the value of trade schooling in gaining jobs in industry has taken place in technical school education. Entry into the mysteries of knowing once gave access via employment into the 'real', given structures of society. As that relation changed, various attempts were made — particularly by teachers — to provide entry for students into cultural understanding. All have been unsuccessful, or at best only marginally successful, since they have left unaddressed the problem that the actual conditions of society have not provided a place for many. Work has remained a social-structural matter, outside the scope of the educators' concerns. Participation in school once had a relation to participation in the workforce through the certificate system. Offering participation in schooling as a cultural good does not offer any consequent participation in society. The schools not only lack a programme to make work a cultural good, but have apparently failed to give it any consideration.

The ALP came to office promising to heal the social divisions between those who found a place in society and those who did not. More flamboyantly, it promised to do away with the economic form of the class struggle. Radicals in education believing in a participatory democracy in cultural terms, welcomed the ALP. But what they have got is renovated capitalism, the installation of a restored class hierarchy presented as if it is in the interests of the whole society, and the temporary failure of the hopes of a cultural democracy. The new plans in education mean more participation in schooling, in the sense of enrolment in a given social structure, rather than a cultural participation in making social life. But that hope of increased participation was pretty spurious anyway because of the practical and ideological inadequacy of the projects and plans of radical hope. In the next few pages I want to run through some of the ideological practices which set the stage for the renovation.

The major ideological practices referred to are those associated with the policies of freedom of information, participation and equity, multiculturalism, anti-discrimination, and integration of the handicapped. Politically, the argument in education has for the past few years been between these 'radical' policies and the 'conservative' approaches characterized by talk about 'standards', 'the rights of the gifted', and 'excellence'. On the conservative side, a little investigation shows that whatever the primary interest of conservatives may be it is less about standards or excellence than about asserting a prior moral order. On the other side the gap between radical expressions and actual practice is more difficult to see, partly because the visions conjured up are appealing. These visions, however, disappear like mirages as we approach them;

what the slogans offer is painfully inadequate for an educational practice. They derive from ideas formulated in the late sixties and early seventies when attempts were made to develop new schooling practices, practices largely abandoned after a few years. Since then the ideas have become translated into the policies of teachers' unions and the ALP. They now provide an ideology for state practices, their development distorted and their weaknesses in practice never analysed. Only a state action gives the old ideas a structure — a structure which, it is now becoming apparent, does not leave much substance in the radical hopes and ideas.

The new policies have a number of general qualities. One of them is a collapse of previously distinct practices and institutions and the transfer of a number of their functions to the state. Education has come to be merged with youth policy, the public service with governmental policies, and ministries of education tend to become the headquarters of curriculum. Prior to these changes, it was possible to distinguish in educational analysis three facets of practice: social policies which determined the extent of the provision of schooling and the regulation of such things as the qualifications of teachers, the size of classes, and the physical conditions of classrooms; curriculum, which set out what was taught, deriving from the academic disciplines and the disciplines of selected areas of industrial or craft practices such as carpentry and engineering; and pedagogy, in which teachers drew into relation the students they taught and the detailed syllabuses derived from the various branches of the curriculum. Each of these aspects of practice had its authorities and practitioners and its boundaries. The present collapse of educational policy into general social policy and the virtual collapse of the areas of curriculum and pedagogy into this policy are characteristic marks of the new approaches. This parallels the general social tendency of the removal of content from particular activities — those associated with particular work or study, neighbourhood institutions, or the family — and its replacement by 'society-in-general'.

In the implementation of these policies, teachers become caught in a contradiction. The strategies of practice which are intended to follow from the general policies include 'negotiation' and 'participation': negotiation among the parents and school councils in formulating policy, between teachers and students in formulating school activity, between student and text in forming what is called 'meaning', and sometimes nowadays between members of the school 'community' in deciding rules and sanctions; participation of all in the negotiating process, participation of both girls and boys in all areas of the curriculum; and equality of entry into participation regardless of developed capabilities or knowledge. Nothing like the same attention, however, is given to what is actually being taught. Teachers can only act by teaching something and this 'something' increasingly has an arbitrarily chosen quality. One response which seems to becoming stronger is that of the conservatives' dogmatic assertion of certain traditional syllabuses. While this view enjoys a certain popularity, the assertion of the value of traditional school work masks what is its only temporary and situational significance. In that respect school work remains empty, much the same as the more obvious emptiness of such things as participation and negotiation. For while all educational purposes can only be realized through specific pieces of school work, emphasis on the school work in itself does not necessarily realize any educational purpose.

These educational policies do of course coincide with a social form, and are one part of its propagation. School work in the past allowed entry into the various forms of employment, or unpaid work, categorized in class and male/female terms. Through what appeared to the pupils, their parents and their teachers as ability at and commitment to work, entry into the social categories appeared to be a consequence of a combination of natural qualities and work habits. The now much-described ideologies formed or reinforced by schooling in the past — that ability and study taken together lead to social success, that competition and equality are two sides of the same meritocratic card, that the hierarchy of jobs is as natural as the normal curve of distribution of intelligence — were focused around entry into work. Now the locus of control is shifting directly to the centre, the state; and productive life and work are of secondary significance. A 'form of social life' without substance is now being reflected and developed by the schools. The criticism of the long-established ideological practices is not accompanied by criticism of that which is emerging. Indeed, the criticism of the old often assists the formation of the new processes of ideological management.

III The Policies of Renovation

Having set out the general features of the new educational policies, I want now to examine some of them in a more detailed fashion. A comparatively simple case, that of freedom of information, will serve as an example.

Freedom of Information: the Identification of Knowledge with Power

On the face of it, freedom of information is an uncomplicated good. No one likes the practices of credit companies keeping secret files on potential users of their services. Workers rightly disapprove of employers keeping records of a kind which contain information inaccessible to them. We dislike or even fear what ASIO is recording about political opponents of the government. Yet in each of these cases we object to information secrecy in terms of certain boundaries. We know that employers, or a group of workers if they have won the chance, will use some knowledge about job applicants other than that provided by the applicants in making decisions; and that investigation, sometimes secret, of some foreign agents, tax evaders, and some criminal groups in the country, is necessary. Our attitude to freedom of information, when it is thought about, takes into account specifics of structure and relations. Without this, there are no limits to freedom of information: local policemen who listen in to private telephone conversations can justify their activities within the ideology, as can the operators of spying bases. The Freedom of Information Act could just as well be called the invasion of privacy act.

When the principle is applied to education — universities at least are not exempt from the application of the Act — the ideological character of 'freedom of information' is quite clear. Information and knowledge become confused, just as they do in the department of information science. Education requires an assumption that some people are more knowledgeable than others, that this knowledge has some objective or at least publicly agreed or accepted quality, and that the power which resides in the unequal entry into a teaching situation is used with restraint, that is, not to indoctrinate, manipulate, make unfair distinctions, or gain favours. Knowledge itself has a hierarchical quality, in that some is more comprehensive or inclusive or generalized. On the other hand, information appears as radically egalitarian. In breaking knowledge to bits, it breaks with the hierarchies of complex knowledge. In fact, information produces new hierarchies of those who control the media and the computer, the new ideology makers. When information has hierarchical qualities, it has gained them by the social position of its possessor. Access to information may be an appropriate way of reducing the arbitrary power of authority in certain circumstances, although the moves made so far have had mixed and, on the whole, contrary effects; right now we would be better off with a restriction of access to private activities and conversations. Treating knowledge as if it were information has quite harmful consequences. In levelling out the hierarchical qualities of knowledge, the process of teaching and examination are made to appear as inter-subjective activities. There appears to be no truth beyond factual information, and only personal authority supported by institutional hierarchies behind the decisions of educators. The unrestricted right to know one's examiners, for example, carries with it an assumption that examiners are making purely subjective decisions. The material foundation for this ideology is, at least in part, provided by the computer industry; computer scientists deal in information and attempt to present it as synonymous with knowledge, just as they communicate through their anthropomorphized machines in unambiguous codes with operationalist meanings and call these languages.

'Freedom of information' is a statement of ideological practice. The idea behind it arises from the period of 'seeing through' the old social practices with their built-in dominations and exploitations based on the given class and male/female distinctions. Access to information apparently equalizes, yet the reality is that it gives greater power to snoopers, whether they be super-cops or mild-mannered journalists. Instead of working through the meaning of equality in new social practices, we are offered the twin processes of individual access to information on the one hand, and on the other the general process of surveillance by state and media. So it is with many features of current policies in schooling.

Participation and Equity

The major policy in education I want to examine is the Participation and Equity Program (PEP). The PEP ideology of 'good' education is based on principles of equality, negotiation and consensus. Its assumptions about knowledge and power are those suggested in the previous section, and it equally falsifies actual practices. Let us begin with a quotation from Senator Susan Ryan, Minister for Education and, until the post-election Cabinet reshuffle, also in charge of Youth Affairs. The following passages are from a Victorian publication, the *Participation and Equity Program Guide*. Senator Ryan is quoted as saying in a ministerial statement of 14 December 1983:

> The Participation and Equity Program places strong emphasis on equity. It will seek to develop education systems under which the less advantaged groups in the community can receive a fair share of the range of benefits education brings. The position of women and girls and other underrepresented groups such as Aboriginals and some ethnic groups will be given particular attention under PEP.

> The Government hopes that PEP will provide a focus for involving people in creating a constructive consensus about education. Employers and unions, parents and the community in general have an important part to play in developing and supporting constructive policies for education and training provision in our schools and TAFE colleges.[1]

The *PEP guide* also finds authority from the Commonwealth Schools Commission Guidelines of March 1984. According to these guidelines the programme will make funds available to stimulate changes in secondary education including:

- catering at all stages more adequately for the needs of the full range of students
- . . . accomodating more adequately the social, economic and cultural diversity of students . . .
- reforming and diversifying the curriculum
- reviewing credentialling and assessment arrangements, including provision for accreditation of work experience
- improving the relationship between schools and the community, and community attitudes to education.[2]

The Victorian Government adds support to the policy. A Victorian Ministerial Paper on *Decision Making in Victorian Education* is quoted in the *PEP guide*:

> The Government will implement a system in which people affected can participate in the decision-making processes in which all students have the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and concepts to participate in a democratic society.[3]

The ministerial paper outlines the principles by which this will be implemented. The principles include 'genuine devolution of authority and responsibility to the school community', 'collaborative decision-making processes', and 'the active redress of disadvantage and discrimination'. In the process parents, teachers, students, principals, administrators and others closely involved in the work of education will 'come together as a group charged with the collective responsibility of reaching agreement or coming to a decision on issues to be resolved'.[4] The consensus idea is clearly evident. 'The purpose of this process is to work through those matters of self-interest and the interests of groups as people bring them forward. The aim is for these groups to arrive at decisions to which they will be committed and for which they will be collectively responsible.'[5]

[1] *PEP Guide*, Participation and Equity Program Committee, Melbourne, 1984, p. 3.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[5] *Ibid.*

The *PEP guide* itself is mainly concerned with the principles of action not policy. The policy is set by governments. The first part of the guide which has been extensively quoted is to remind users of the decisions of the Commonwealth and state governments. Many of the principles of action are, in accord with the policies, about decision making. 'Good' decision making is concerned with participatory processes, and reflects them. We know a good decision when it is made by processes that: 'reflect and make provision for the diversity of cultures within the school community'; apply 'counter-sexist principles in the formation and practice of groups responsible for decision making'; and implement 'methods of communication that facilitate the involvement of the broad school community in developments'.[6] In accord with these principles of process, a definition of curriculum is included: 'Curriculum is taken to mean the sum of all experiences, planned and unplanned, developed by the school community. It includes not only what is taught, and approaches to teaching and learning, but also the way in which the school is organized.'[7] This definition of curriculum, its source unacknowledged in the guide, is one which was formulated in the early seventies by teachers active in the radical transformation of education. Then it had some significance for it demanded schools look at what they were really doing. However, it was, and remains, deficient in suggesting what should be done. When removed from the context of its formation, the definition has quite different uses — for example, it allows an argument that since everything done is equally curriculum, distinctions of value or quality cannot be made except on extraneous grounds.

The above quotations illustrate the character of the social policy intended for state schools to follow. Its chief characteristic is that equality is defined as an equality of process, an equality of entry into interaction. The process of interaction makes no distinctions between the parties to the interaction — parents, students, teachers, bureaucrats are, ideally, to enter equally. The content of education, that is what used to be called the curriculum, becomes replaced by a communicative process.

The *Participation and Equity Program* is not a marginal activity addded on to the existing structures. It captures the activism of the most interested teachers. If someone wanted to shape the direction of teacher activism, without spending much money and without strong authoritarian measures, they could well have invented PEP. To make the programme work requires a great deal of energy and skill, energy and skill which is most often held by the activists in a school. It meets their desires, to a point, for greater equality in schooling, for better and more equal relations with parents, so it is willingly followed. When exhaustion and a feeling of pointlessness set in, as does happen, there is no clear outlet for the dissatisfaction and frustration, since PEP partially meets radical ideas. All that can be demanded is more of the same. But no conspiracy theory is required. What exists is the integration of radical educational ideas into social management through a new ideological practice. New bureaucracies and divisions within schools and school systems are set up, but are not recognized as such, for the new hierarchies are headed by those who are most active in promoting participation, access, the rights of interest groups, and so on. PEP remains the 'Left' position in education and social policy generally.

---

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[7] *Ibid.*

The radical policies, in brief, are characterized by: their exchange quality, in that they are strong on the process of exchange, and weak on the contents which are exchanged; the absence of issues or explicit meaning beyond that offered by the participants; issues by definition having only a local significance, potentially producing vast inequalities between schools and regions; and the adoption of undifferentiated equality and interchangeability within any one communicative system, since, in principle, all parties in schooling at the level of their community are assumed to be not only equally significant in schooling but to be able to enter into it as if they were the same.

The Origins of Educational Ideology

The ideologies of education associated with such terms as participation and equity, multiculturalism, and freedom of information arise from a real social change. Intellectual knowledge and practices no longer enter into the other processes of social life through those separations characterized by the old examination system. Their interpenetration — that is, of knowledge and societal process — has reached the point where, in ideology, they appear the same. Thus social life (and nature) appear as if they were constructed, or invented, just as ideas are thought to be; and conversely, knowledge is sometimes thought to represent group or personal interest, a bit of profit-producing cultural capital. Teachers, like other highly educated people who work with large numbers of others, have been at the forefront of this social change They have been largely responsible for the production of ideologies which have proposed a belief in a constructed world in which their own knowledge and practices have been presented as the general social model. These ideologies do not represent the full social reality; certainly they do not represent the reality of those with whom teachers (and others such as welfare workers) actually work. Such ideologies can have a political use, in that they draw people into an attachment to positions which are mobilized into a larger class-stabilizing frame by successful governments.

The position held by progressive teachers is inadequate for a general social practice to which education contributes. The resolution of this inadequacy requires an approach to education which involves teachers and their communities. What is required is the formulation of theories and practices which take up the questions of the relation of intellectual practice and its products to everyday life. Unless that is done, the relationship is left to be manipulated by the state. Of course, what is proposed here is just what radical teachers, at least in Victoria, claim to have been doing. To a point they have in the attempt to make schooling relevant and closer to the experiences of the people; but they have done so only within the long established relation of schooling and society. To understand the situation, teachers' relations to those they teach is worth looking at.

IV The Reconstruction of the Teaching Situation

Traditionally, teachers entered their jobs through their success at school work. Teacher biographies, of which there are now many, suggest a picture of young people from *petit-bourgeois* or working-class backgrounds achieving apparent social mobility through success at school work. Teachers adopted and propagated the ideology of successs and understanding through academic work as a consequence of this experience. When in the late 1960s and early 1970s this was shown, in general, to be false, it led in the first place to the flowering of progressivist and liberationist ideas. It had its counterpart in the official theories of education, where it was said that particular content did not matter and that general skills and conceptual understandings were what counted as schooling knowledge.

As the old relationship of knowledge and society and the old ideologies of ability and work became obsolete, the teachers found themselves in a key social position. Through schooling, the new orientations to employment and social life were being formed.

Instead of schools being a kind of service attachment to the old social classes, picking up their young and placing them back in their appropriate class set, with an occasional reclassification (as Bowles and Gintis explained), the schools took a more active part in forming the social groupings. Teachers, in this key position, were able to win greater control over their work conditions. Even the curriculum could be teacher-based, for the old class authority was a little bamboozled by the new situation.

After the days of libertarianism faded — although there are still plenty of advocates of the criticism that schooling is a class phenomenon, people who find their pleasure in the enjoyment of school resistance, and proponents of schooling as a series of individual life projects — radical teachers reformulated their practices. The radicals have not found their generality, commonly, in the idea of the working-class curriculum. Rather, they have found it in their own existence, as intellectually-trained people engaged in a practice involving others. Years ago, teachers followed practices based on an ideology of bringing knowledge and culture to the people, part of that tradition of enlightenment which gave us also mechanics institutes and public libraries. At the same time they also assisted in integrating the classes. More recently a more popular approach to knowledge and culture has been followed: attempts to relate knowledge to experience, learning to social relations, participation to control. This too has its hidden agenda. The self-realization which is promoted — as values, human relations, community languages and multiculturalism become everyday terms — leaves individuals without social and communal defences against the information society. They can become itemized, in all their variety, on the computers of the modern state. For all the changes in teachers' activities and ideologies, the consistency is that teachers have accepted their role as purveyors of a culture defined as words, thoughts, knowledge, the arts: a definition not including societal structures or work or the economy. The radical interpretations of recent years still allow teachers to put themselves apart in a separate realm of culture. Teachers, in spite of all the changes, indeed accept the old distinction of culture and social structure in the particular form of the distinction between mental and manual labour.

Leaving aside trade teachers in the technical schools, teachers have always entered education from the 'mental' side of the mental-manual division of labour. Though coming often from working-class backgrounds, they left this background behind, finding personal advancement and new horizons through schooling. The culture propagated in schools was framed by the academic disciplines. When intellectual activity broke its old boundaries — both within itself as represented by the disciplines, and between knowledge and social action — it became possible to think that people could live by culture alone. Hence notions of participation, negotiation, equality and multiculturalism seemed to fill the whole of life. The old intellectual structures, with their long apprenticeships, appeared out of date. The decline in the significance of concrete, actual content made the cultural notions more powerful.

Yet people cannot live in this manner, as parents have often said. But parents in general enter the school on the basis of their own experiences and expectations. A discussion between parents and teachers on the manner in which the school could actually assist in producing the foundations of a new social life required a new theorizing by teachers. Instead the ideology of participation has allowed the management of education — and more — by the state, and it is quite incapable of solving the problems we currently face.

V The Conservative Reaction

It is a platitude to say that schools are not society, and a half-true banality to say that schools cannot change society. Such statements allow both conservatives and radicals a way out. Conservatives, pointing to social and cultural realities such as that children are not the same as adults, can find ready support for attacks on teachers. Using the truth that standards refer to knowledge, and neglecting that they also refer to the nature of the relationships between persons, conservatives make much of the more nonsensical ideologies of equality of participation and negotiation. When their arguments are looked at twice, it is clear that by standards conservatives mean the old moral order. The evolution of a conservative position, as shown in such viewpoints as those expressed in *Quadrant,* is from a cultural élitism of a Leavis-Bantock kind to a justification of the present social hierarchy at almost any price. Their claim on the present hierarchical order is presented, perhaps even to themselves, as a lien on educational standards.

In the tradition of conservatism, their propaganda on education supports the current social order through the advocacy of the kind of schooling supported by the previous one. When mechanical capitalism was to the fore, they advocated the more aristocratic forms of an earlier period. This no doubt had its significance in maintaining a certain ruling-class continuity while also allowing a bit of criticism. Now that a more advanced capitalism has come into being, the conservatives argue for the standards of the categories of the earlier social form. Since it is clear that social order of some kind is necessary, and that modernization threatens social life, much of their criticism is superficially appealing. Conservatives have no theory of — or liking for — social change; hence they seem to believe that it comes only from the actions of the Left. In the end, their practice supports the social powers which head us towards barbarism.

The Present Danger: The Opening to the Right

To some, it seems that the policies of the ALP in government, by making for a rationalization of the social order and the renovation of its social authority, have put a stopper on a wide and varied range of initiatives of the participation and equity type. Certainly the consolidation of initiative in the state and its apparatuses is dangerous, for it makes for great power for an incoming right-wing party. There are more serious problems. The state increasingly replaces other social institutions. As the intermediate structures of society — the work places and the communities — disappear to be replaced by the media and the computer, the state increasingly becomes the author of social institutions. It authorizes rather than regulates education, health, employment, the arts, and sport and entertainment. Of course, the state is often requested to do so, but this is a sign of weakness, not militancy, on the part of the supplicants.

The danger arises most strongly when the state cannot deliver its promises. Take for example, the educational promise of the twelve-year school. The *Blackburn Report* proposes this school for all, or nearly all students. In the short term, it offers a common unstreamed curriculum and a place for nearly all young people in it. Its success depends upon the existence of places in social life along the traditional lines of employment, yet its authors know this is an impossibility. (An alternative view is that the authors of the *Report* believe that the thirty per cent who will not be at these schools will constitute the unschooled, unwanted and unemployed, but this assumes such a cynical approach that it cannot be contemplated for more than a moment.) Hopes which are generated and not met leave the way open for demagogues on the Right to mobilize the dispossessed against invented causes of their distress. An unmentioned connection seems to exist in England between the Thatcher clique — producing unemployment through modernization — and the National Front — mobilizing the unemployed in orgies of violence. There may be worse to come.

Abstract capital — that capital which mobilizes production, knowledge and communication — in its long march through the institutions has opened up enormous possibilities just as it has destroyed actualities. Its progress has opened up the possibility of combining reflective, thoughtful activity with material production, just as it has destroyed the opportunity for many to engage in the production of the conditions of their existence. While creating freedom from the restrictions of traditional sex roles, it has made the actuality of being a man or a woman nearly meaningless. While freeing people from the ghettoes of class and religion, it has made new ghettoes of the socially excluded. While offering the availability of knowledge of other times and places, it has transformed knowledge into information and data. While offering the possibility of access to energy and materials not previously dreamed-of, it creates the possibility of ultimate destruction. And while bringing the peoples of the world closer together, it destroys the national and communal bases upon which people enter into association with one another. In the broadest sense it is education — the bringing of knowledge into social life — which is central to a project which can turn possibilities into actualities. Radical teachers have not made a mistake in being too radical, but in not being radical enough. The task is for teachers, with others, to begin a project in which the forms of social institutions and work are considered and transformed, so that the notion of culture may come to include the development of social structures. The true nature of curriculum, as practised, was formulated in the definition proposed (quoted earlier) by radical Victorian secondary teachers seventeen years ago. That definition, as the theorists say now, deconstructed curriculum, and has been used to take education apart. It is time to produce a new one: curriculum is the development of that knowledge, thought and practice which is required by young people to enable them to take part in the production and reproduction of social life and to come to know the character of these processes.

This is to propose a new project which has its theoretical, curriculum, pedagogical and institutional forms. All of these levels need working on. The exercise is necessarily participatory, and each level has its own appropriate forms of participation. The boundaries between the levels are clear, but permeable. Without a project of this kind — one which relates schooling to the lives of the people in a more direct fashion than that mediated by the state — the present activities of teachers lead to the further broadening of the gap between people's lives and the ideologies which are at present being promoted.

* * *

The project suggested here is a big one. It is not intended as a laying down of the line for others to follow. People associated with *Arena* are willing to attempt to extend the discussion, to consider whether the analysis makes sense, and if so to work out how the project can be developed. Any reader who would like to take part in at least an initial further discussion should drop a line to the *Arena* post office box, and we will take it from there.

Source: D. White, 'Education: Controlling the participants', *Arena*, no. 72, 1985, pp. 63–79.

Annotated bibliography

Albinski, H. S. *The Australian Labor Party and the Aid to Parochial Schools Controversy*. Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa, 1966.
Albinski writes of the issues as a political scientist, examining the manner in which the ALP was divided on the issue of state aid to private schools in 1963-64, the use made of the division by the Menzies government, and the role of the DLP. This small book is also useful in understanding the conflict between traditionalists and modernisers in education and social life generally.

Barcan, A. *A History of Australian Education*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1980.
A general history of Australian education. This book is not directed towards the relation between school and society; it is more a history of educational ideas and practices. The author argues for a humanist approach to education, and is concerned about tendencies since the mid 1960s. It is a daring book, covering more ground than that of most historians of education, and should have been controversial.

Bell, D. *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* Heinemann, London, 1974.
While this is a book about America, it is the first lengthy account of the role played by science—theory generally—and hence education in modern society. The first sections of the book are particularly useful.

Bennett, D. 'Education: Back to the drawing board'. In G. Evans & J. Reeves (eds). *Labor Essays 1982*. Drummond, Richmond, Victoria, 1982.
In this article the late David Bennett, one of the most prominent analysts of educational policy of the past twenty years, looks critically at the development of the ALP's education policy since the mid 1960s. His argument is that the ALP must maintain and develop a policy of social equality, and that education can do something toward this goal.

Blackburn, J. 'Schools and the Schools Commission'. In I. K. F. Birch and D. Smart (eds). *The Commonwealth Government and Education 1964-1976: Political Initiatives and Developments*, Drummond, Richmond, Victoria, 1977.
A reasoned and reflective account and justification of the Report of the Interim Committee of the Schools Commission (Karmel Report), *Schools in Australia*, 1973, by one of the authors of the Report.

Cowen, Z. 'The growth of federal participation in Australian education'. In W. G. Walker (ed.). *School, College and University: The Administration of Education in Australia*. University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1972, pp. 3-16.
An informative article, written in a technical rather than an interpretive fashion, by one of the architects of the state-serving role of the modern university.

Cleverly, J. & Lawry, J. *Australian Education in the Twentieth Century*. Longman, Camberwell, Victoria, 1972.
A series of articles by several authors, including one by Eric Bowker on the Commonwealth and education. Bowker points to the gradual tendency to central control of finance, and hence of schooling.

Dawkins, J. & Costello, R. 'Education: Progress and equality'. In Reeves, J. & Thomson, K. (ed.). *Labor Essays 1983*. Drummond, Melbourne.
The authors argue that the federal government should and can act in a way to produce equal opportunity in education for all Australian children. Part of this, the equalising of school funding, is to be achieved by negotiation; other parts can be achieved by careful use of funds and leadership.

D'Cruz, J. V. & Sheehan, P. J. (eds). *The Renewal of Australian Education*. Primary Education, Richmond, Victoria, 1975.
The editors have collected together the main critical articles published on the Schools Commission. This book contains almost the total quantity of critical educational interpretation of this major change in Australian education.

Fitzgerald, R. J. *Through a Rear Vision Mirror*. Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, 1975.
This book is a comparison of education and the forces for educational change of the 1940s and the 1970s. In the 1940s tradition prevailed, in the 1970s more informed and rational approaches were in use. The author explains these in terms of cosmopolitan influences prevailing over local influences. His views are in sharp contrast to those of Barcan in the 1980 book reference which is listed and annotated above.

Gill, P. N. 'The federal science grant: An episode in church and state relations, 1963-64'. In E. L. French (ed.). *Melbourne Studies in Education 1964*. Melbourne University Press.
A detailed consideration of the first aid to schools, both state and private, by the Commonwealth government. Gill outlines the development of the issue, the nature of the decision, and the responses to it.

Gregory, J. S. *Church and State*. Cassell, North Melbourne, 1973.
A study of the development of state systems of education, particularly with reference to Victoria. This book interprets events which occured before Federation. The analysis is useful to students of the later history of education, for Gregory shows the far-reaching effects of the mode in which compulsory schooling was established in this country.

Grundy, D. *Secular, Compulsory and Free*. Melbourne University Press, 1972.
An analysis of the establishment of the compulsory education system under the Victorian Education Act of 1872. The book is a detailed historical study, from which the reader can gain much material for reflection upon later dilemmas of education.

Hannan, B. 'A little guide to curriculum politics'. In *Democratic Curriculum*. Allen & Unwin and the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association, Sydney, 1985.
A readable and incisive guide to various political positions in educational discussion. Left and Right, words frequently used in political discussion, have particular content when schooling and curriculum are being considered. The article is a good example of the critical work of Australia's best writer on education.

Hyams, B. K. & Bessant, B. *Schools for the People?* Longman, Camberwell, Victoria, 1972.
An introductory study of the history of the state schools of Australia. Readers will find that the concluding sections of the book have been almost entirely contradicted by actual developments.

Marginson, S. J. 'The collapse of the 1973 Karmel consensus'. *Australian Teachers Federation Monograph* issue 9, 15 December 1985.
In this monograph, Marginson presents a systematic analysis of how the Karmel formula for funding state and private schools has been systematically eroded by more recent policy developments in education. He demonstrates how these developments have led to increased inequalities of educational outcome.

Sharp, G. 'Constitutive abstraction and social practice'. *Arena* vol. 70, 1985, pp. 48–82.
This article, although somewhat difficult to read, will almost certainly become a standard reference for those seeking to interpret the changes made to the modern world. Geoff Sharp argues that all societies are constituted around certain abstractions, and shows the function of the intellectuals in the constitution of our society. While giving space for class analysis, this article demonstrates a much more powerful methodology.

Tannock, P. 'The development of the Commonwealth government's role in Australian education'. *The Forum of Education*, vol.XXX, no. 2, September 1971, pp. 152–5.
This brief article outlines concisely the role and activities of the Commonwealth government until 1970.

Tannock, P. D. & Birch, I. K. 'Defining the limits of Commonwealth education power: The Drummond case, the federal government and the universities'. In S. Murray-Smith (ed.). *Melbourne Studies in Education 1973*. Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1973, pp. 163–74.
During the Second World War the Commonwealth government established manpower regulations, which included the control of entry to universities. The power to set quotas for the universities was challenged in the High Court of Australia. This article outlines the case, and discusses the significance of the ruling and judgments of the court in assessing the powers of the Commonwealth government in education.

Yates, L. 'Theorising inequality today'. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, vol. 7, no. 2, 1986.
In this article, Yates presents a theoretical assessment of some movements in the theorising of inequality over the past two decades in Australia, with particular reference to the issue of gender as compared with class. This is a particularly useful article which suggests a number of new ways for developing for our thinking about inequalities in and through schooling.

Wheelwright, E. L. (ed.). *Higher Education in Australia*. Cheshire, Melbourne, 1965.
This is a collection of articles by university academics commenting on the Martin Report. Some articles are critical, but most accept the new role cast for the universities and colleges.

About the author

Doug White began teaching as a student teacher in 1950 at Timboon Consolidated School. After gaining his Trained Primary School Teacher's Certificate at Geelong Teachers' College and a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Melbourne, he worked in technical and high schools for several years, and in the Curriculum and Research branch of the Education Department, from 1965 to 1969. Since 1970 he has been a member of the Centre for the Study of Innovation in Education at the La Trobe University School of Education. He has a Master of Education degree from the University of Melbourne and a Doctor of Philosophy degree from La Trobe University. He is one of the editors of *Arena*.

Acknowledgments

Quotation on p. 12 reproduced with permission of the University of Western Australia from Tannock, P. D., *The Government of Education in Australia: The Origins of Federal Policy* (Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press, 1975); quotations on pp. 22 and 22–3 by permission of the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra; quotation on pp. 23–4 from *Arena*, nos 32–33 (double issue), 1973, p. 1. Reading 1 reproduced by permission of Penguin Books Australia Ltd from Douglas C. White, 'Education and Capitalism' in John Playford and Douglas Kirsner (eds), *Australian Capitalism: Towards a Socialist Critique*, 1972; Reading 2 from *Arena*, nos 32–33 (double issue), 1973, pp. 35–48; Reading 3 reproduced by permission of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association, North Richmond, from the *Victorian Teacher*, vol. 2, no. 1, March 1983, pp. 6–7; Reading 4 from *Arena* no. 68, 1984, pp. 79–90; Reading 5 from *Arena*, no. 72, 1985, pp. 63–79. Photo of Douglas Charles White on p. 124 by Phil Noyce, reproduced by permission of the Victorian Secondary Teachers Association, North Richmond.

Deakin University

Policy development and analysis
**Education and the State: Federal involvement
in educational policy development**
ISBN 0 7300 0472 4
Cat. no. 000000183